



## MEMBERSHIP FORM 2004 - 2005

Membership runs until June 30, 2005

HONG KONG  
PLAYERS

Benefits: Regular workshops, productions, advanced bookings for shows and social activities, plus the Hong Kong Players Newsletter. Please complete the form in block letters.

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to RENEW my membership for 2004 – 2005

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NAME: Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss \_\_\_\_\_

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Please tick the club activities that interest you: mark with an E if you have experience in that area:

_____ Directing	_____ Stage Management	_____ Acting
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_____ Publicity	_____ Sound	_____ Play Reading
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	_____ Set Painting	_____ Make-Up

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose a cheque (made payable to "Hong Kong Players") for:

\_\_\_\_\_ HK\$100: Annual individual subscription for one adult

\_\_\_\_\_ HK\$50: Annual individual subscription for one student/child, aged \_\_\_\_\_ years  
(must be 21 years or under)

\_\_\_\_\_ HK\$150: Annual family subscription

Send to: Members Secretary, Hong Kong Players, GPO Box 8218, Hong Kong

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# PRIVATE LIVES

BY NOËL COWARD

DIRECTED BY ADAM WEST

Tues July 27 to Sat July 31, 7.30 pm

FRINGE CLUB

Lower Albert Road, Central

<http://www.hongkongplayers.com>



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## Chairman's Notes

"In tropical climes  
There are certain times of day  
When all the citizens retire  
To tear their clothes off and perspire..."

An aficionado of Hong Kong, Noël Coward could just as easily have written about the noon-day rain that accompanies so many July days here. But mad dogs, theatre types and the very finest of theatre audiences stick around despite the weather, and we at HK Players are very glad of it (well, maybe not so much the mad dogs...).

On behalf of the Players committee, I'd like to express deep gratitude to Adam West for all the enthusiasm, openness and talent he has brought to the task of directing; to the cast, for making this such a team effort; to Ernie Corpus, for his tremendous sets, lighting and music; to Claire Saeki, for splendid costumes created with such calm efficiency; to Uryyan Mueller, for appearing as if by magic to provide us with impeccable stage management; to Adrian Davis, for doing so much of the unsung but essential behind-the-scenes work; and, of course, to those of you whose support makes it possible for us to continue putting on productions.

*Enjoy the show!*

**Stephen Bolton**

## Director's Notes

For those of us whose generation's most immediate memory of Noël Coward is his cameo in "The Italian Job", it can be easy to forget just what a colossus of 20<sup>th</sup> Century culture the man was; one of the first, and to this day one of the greatest, superstars of popular entertainment – playwright, actor, director, singer-songwriter, darling of the press (or its target) for so long. "The Master".

The greatest character that Coward the playwright ever invented for the delight of the public was himself. The dressing gown-clad, cocktail-sipping epitome of style, charm and wit who titillated and teased a thirsty public offstage also graced the stage in a number of thinly-veiled, if not entirely diaphanous, disguises. "Private Lives" falls squarely into that category, Elyot's views on the merits of flippancy being entirely in keeping with Coward's general stance.

"Trite", "shallow", "flippant" – terms often used then and now about Coward's theatrical output. Where is the profundity, the analysis and reflection of the human condition? "I have", Coward once wrote, "no deep thoughts about the human race"; the stage, he insisted, "is primarily a place of entertainment... Political or social propaganda in the theatre... is a cracking bore". I would only add that, as I'm sure any oceanographer would tell you, a lot can be told about the depths by what is found at the surface.

As regards this production, I'm under no illusion that "Private Lives" is a rarely-performed play. I have even directed it before (so there really is no excuse...). A great novel is kept alive by being read. A great play is kept alive by performance and nothing else – and there I rest my case.

So strong and seductive is the persona of Coward that he ghost-walks through many productions of his work. He is regrettably the victim of pastiche. I was keen to avoid cigarette holders held at ridiculous angles and that ultra-clipped chiselled diction that Coward made his own (but, in truth, largely developed as a child for ease of discourse with his half-deaf mother). I aimed for the cast to deliver these superb lines as those of real characters and hope that, by avoiding the distraction of mimicry, the tribute to Coward's wit and insight is actually greater.

I have a great burden of debt to Hong Kong Players. It is courageous for a theatre company of such vintage and standing to allow an unproven director to play.

Thank you to all those who have assisted in whatever way, manner or form.

**Adam West**

## Cast

Elyot Chase  
Sybil Chase  
Victor Prynne  
Amanda Prynne  
Louise

*Adam West  
Liz Stone  
Stephen Bolton  
Maxine Scholfield  
Chi Nguyen*

## Production Team

Director  
Producer  
Stage Manager  
Set Designer  
Costume Designer  
Lighting Designer  
Backstage Crew

*Adam West  
Stephen Bolton  
Urgyan Mueller  
Ernie Corpus  
Claire Saeki  
Ernie Corpus  
Matt Bailey  
Karly Cox  
Linda Davy  
Iris Eu  
Yoshinori Fuji  
Jackie Huke  
Priscilla Jones  
Mae Lim  
Tom Robinson  
Brian Schwarze  
Margaret Wright  
Neerja Sujanani  
Neerja Sujanani  
Cheryl Elting  
Brian Schwarze  
Jackie Huke*

Make-Up  
Programme Designer  
Print Production Manager  
Publicity Photos  
Front of House



### Stephen Bolton

This is Stephen's eighth show with Players. He's played Romeo's best friend, a grammar-obsessed rat, a dirty vicar and a man in a frock (twice). He's also directed "The Importance of Being Earnest", a panto and a night of ten-minute plays. He enjoys the role of Victor – in what other context is one given *permission* to carry on as a "rampaging gasbag"?



### Maxine Scholfield

Maxine started her acting career aged 12 playing Elizabeth I. She had her hair dyed red especially for the occasion, and this started two passions in her life - acting and changing her hair colour. After finishing drama school last year, this is her first production with the Hong Kong Players. She is relieved that for this production she is breaking away from a trend that has followed her since her acting debut, where she has consistently been cast as the queen.



### Liz Stone

Sadly, this is Liz's final performance with Hong Kong Players before travelling around Asia for the next few months. After playing a lost Robin Hood and a tap dancing nurse, Liz is relishing playing a highly strung, annoying blonde. (Any resemblance to herself is purely coincidental.....)



### Adam West

A toe-dipper in the ocean of the theatrical arts, Adam West (who, yes, does share a name with the 1960s "Batman" actor) is a first-time director for Hong Kong Players. His years at veterinary college saw the writing, or at least the excretion, of two end-of-term revues. Marginally less shameworthy have been adaptations for the stage of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (rumours that the Irish wolfhound was sedated to enhance its complicity were scandalous and unfounded) and the Neil Young song "Wrecking Ball". Adam lives in the New Territories with four dogs who are generally in good health.



### Chi Nguyen

This is Chi's first show with Hong Kong Players. She wishes it to be known that she's not actually French (No, really!), but is glad of the opportunity to wear a maid's uniform - her job in the legal profession gives her few chances to dress up in anything slinky.

### Urgyan Mueller - Stage Manager

Urgyan is a "graduate" of Hong Kong Players - having spent much of her teen years involved in various Players shows, she went off to Rose Bruford in the UK, where she has recently finished a degree in Stage Management.

### Ernie Corpus - Set and Lighting Design

Ernie Corpus was production designer for the Players' "Stepping Out" and lighting designer for "The Importance Of Being Earnest". He was the stage designer for HK Singers' "Guys & Dolls" and the lighting designer for American Community Theater's "The Witches". Ernie has designed shows for other theatre groups in Hong Kong. He was the Show Production and Ambient Area Designer/Consultant to IGOR'S - the horror-theme theatre restaurant both in Hong Kong and in Singapore.

**ACT ONE** - The terrace of a hotel in France. A summer evening

**ACT TWO** - Amanda's flat in Paris. A few days later. Evening

**ACT THREE** - The same. Next morning

There will be a 20-minute interval after Act One, and a 10-minute interval after Act Two.

## Writer's Note

NOËL COWARD

Les Avants,  
sur Montreux,  
Switzerland.

9th October 1969.

All my best wishes to the cast and  
the members of the Hong Kong Stage  
Club for their production of  
"Present Laughter" on November 18th  
and for your continuing success in  
the future.



## Acknowledgements

*Hong Kong Players would like to thank the following organizations and individuals for helping with this production:*

Dr Andrew Baker  
Dr Stephen Benton  
Kate Burton & Phil Whelan (RTHK)  
Liana Cafolla (SCMP)  
Ray Charles RIP  
Cheryl Elting  
Jim Gould, Irene Ip, and all at "The Works" (ATV World)  
Phil Harvey  
Mr. Lo (Set Construction)  
Geordie Steve Marr  
Henry Scholfield  
Stewie Griffin

Our apologies to anyone whose name reached us too late for inclusion on this page - Thank you for your support.

## About Hong Kong Players

Hong Kong Players has been the SAR's foremost community theatre group since 1844, although known by other names. In its current guise, the group began life on 1 January 1991 as the successor to the Garrison Players and Hong Kong Stage Club. Maintaining the spirit of these predecessors we put on a rich diversity of shows, from Shakespeare to contemporary drama. Today, Players mounts three or four productions a year, most significantly the annual pantomime. And it's not just about acting! Many members remain happily backstage, contributing in areas such as set design, make-up and crewing. If you would like to join us, please complete the membership form in this brochure.

[www.hongkongplayers.com](http://www.hongkongplayers.com)

## Forthcoming Productions

### Hong Kong Players

#### *Alice in Wonderland - The Christmas Panto*

Shouson Theatre – Hong Kong Arts Centre  
December 2-11

For information on our upcoming productions and workshops – check out our website:

**[www.hongkongplayers.com](http://www.hongkongplayers.com)**

### Hong Kong Singers

#### *Sweet Charity*

October 2004

The Fringe Club

For further information, please e-mail:

[hksingers@hotmail.com](mailto:hksingers@hotmail.com), call 2838-6517/2537-4180 or  
visit their website:

**[www.hksingers.com](http://www.hksingers.com)**

### American Community Theatre

ACT's next show is Rebecca Gilman's *Boy gets Girl*. A tale of a woman whose life is changed by a stalker.

The Fringe

24-29 November

Email- [acthk@hotmail.com](mailto:acthk@hotmail.com)

## Hong Kong Players Present Committee 2004-2005

<b>Chairman</b>	<i>Stephen Bolton</i>
<b>Honorary Secretary</b>	<i>Priscilla Jones</i>
<b>Honorary Treasurer</b>	<i>Graeme Kingshott</i>
<b>Business Manager</b>	<i>Brian Schwarze</i>
<b>Publicity Manager</b>	<i>Lou McWilliams</i>
<b>Workshop Director</b>	<i>Stephen Elting</i>
<b>Technical Director</b>	<i>Lucas Cox</i>
<b>Wardrobe Manager</b>	<i>Margaret Wright</i>
<b>Social Secretary</b>	<i>Guy Russell</i>
<b>House Member</b>	<i>Adrian Davis</i>
<b>Members' Secretary</b>	<i>Linda Davy</i>