

spent abroad. He produced books on the history of Denmark and international law and travelled in Holland, France and Italy. In 1721 a theatre was opened in Lille Grønnegade, Copenhagen. Until then Danish theatres had presented only touring German and French companies, but Holberg was invited to write the very first plays in Danish. He wrote five in 1722, of which JEPPE was the fourth, and went on to produce a further 21 by 1726. He was influenced by Moliere, who had died 11 years before his birth; by the *commedia dell'arte*, which he had seen in Italy; and by classic Greek drama, whose unities of time, place and action he closely observes in JEPPE.

All Danish theatres were closed in 1728 by Frederik IV, who was suffering a late-in-life attack of religious scruples, following a dissolute early life. Holberg wrote a play with the title: 'The Laying to Rest of Danish Comedy' in which the hero leaps into the grave with his comedies. They remained out of production until Frederik V, married to and, perhaps, persuaded by the English Princess Louise, re-opened the theatres in 1748.

By the time of his death Holberg had written nearly forty plays, 25 of which were performed in his final year as a last tribute to him.

We have been able to discover almost nothing about the presentation of plays in the Danish theatre before 1748. Lacking any precise knowledge of the 1722 production, we have leaned towards the English Georgian theatre mode of presentation.

NEXT SEASON'S PROGRAMME

While nothing is completely settled, we hope to present two plays by the Czech writer and politician, Vaclav Havel, for our November production. The plays, AUDIENCE and VERNISAZ, have been translated by Michael Branwell with the title: THE CATALYST. We await the publisher's permission to perform.

Other productions under discussion include an original play for children in January, a Chekov revival, a Camus Play (LA PESTE) and our 200th Production in May. Full details will be published in our annual leaflet early this autumn.

MOOT HOUSE PLAYERS ACKNOWLEDGE WITH GRATITUDE
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1992

THEATRE SANS FRONTIERES
MOOT HOUSE PLAYERS
present

KING FOR A DAY

by Ludvig Holberg
translated and adapted by Inger and Ken Collins
with original music by Duncan Lane

Characters in order of their appearance:

NILLE	...	Jennifer Southwell
JEPPE	...	Neil Bird
JACOB SHOEMAKER	...	Robin Harcourt
BARON NILUS	...	John Truman
SECRETARY to the Baron	...	Russell Harris
ERICH, the Baron's servant	...	Nigel Porteous
VALET to the Baron	...	Douglas Sheppard
A DOCTOR	...	Tony Davey
ANOTHER DOCTOR	...	Jon McNamara
A BAILIFF	...	Robin Harcourt
THE BAILIFF'S WIFE	...	Carys Roberts
A BARRISTER	...	Tony Davey
ANOTHER BARRISTER	...	Jon McNamara
MAGNUS	...	Gordon Whittle

Directed by Ken Collins

ACT I Jeppe's yard and Jacob's inn
ACT II The bedroom of Baron Nilus
ACT III The Baron's garden
INTERVAL
ACT IV Jeppe's yard
ACT V Jeppe's yard and Jacob's inn

Refreshments are available during the interval in the foyer and the bar. The bar has a club licence, and members of the audience with a ticket for tonight's performance are entitled to use its facilities.

Sets designed by Ken Collins and constructed and painted by members of the company under the direction of Christopher Driver

Properties by Jack Mitchley Costumes by Laws
Lighting and sound by Christopher Driver
Trumpet fanfares played by Mick Sealey
Dance arranged by Jennifer Southwell
Stage staff: Christina Scriven

NOTES ON THE AUTHOR AND HIS PLAY

LUDVIG HOLBERG (1684-1754) was born in Bergen, the last of 12 children. His studies at a Bergen academy were shortened when the academy was destroyed by fire, but its astute principal promptly dispatched his students to Copenhagen to complete their courses. Holberg was 17 when he arrived in 1702, and in March 1704 he graduated in several subjects, including Greek, Latin and Hebrew. A month later he graduated in theology, but was not permitted to enter the ministry until he was aged 25.

Thus, Holberg embarked on the first of his many tours around Europe. He travelled first to Holland, but had to return to stay with a cousin in Kristiansand for a year in 1705 to earn enough money by tutoring to continue his travels. In 1706 he landed at Gravesend, walked to London and then Oxford, where he stayed until the following year teaching languages and the flute. His first few months in Oxford were hard:

'We lived for three whole months in Oxford so sparsely that we only had meat every fourth day. The other days we had to make do with bread, cheese and wrinkled apples.

Thanks to the teaching I did, I became accounted one of the best flautists in the town.'

Holberg's *lingua franca* was Latin, but he was not impressed by the standard of Latin speaking among undergraduates. Much of his income, undoubtedly, came from teaching this language, as students were not permitted to drink in inns until they had graduated, and a proficiency in Latin was essential.

Holberg was also astounded by the English people's ignorance of their continental neighbours. He was particularly put out by one man who thought that Norway was a town in Sweden.

He left England in 1708 to spend a year in Germany, and then returned to Copenhagen, where he was awarded a scholarship of 120 Rigsdaler a year for four years, three of which had to be