

# windows of inspiration

a view of performing and visual arts from around the world

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THE ARTS  
SPRING 2008 PERFORMANCES AND EXHIBITIONS



## **The Birthday Party by Harold Pinter**

*Directed by Dr. Eric Prince*

February 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16 at 7:30 p.m. and February 10 at 2:00 p.m.

University Theatre, University Center for the Arts

1400 Remington Street, Fort Collins, Colorado

\$16, \$14/Seniors, \$7/CSU Students

*The Birthday Party* tells the story of Stanley, an unlikely hero and a strangely compelling victim, who is hidden away in seedy seaside digs somewhere on the southern coast of England. Indulged and mothered by his elderly landlady Meg, Stanley's comfortable retreat is forever changed with the arrival of two unexpected visitors, Goldberg and McCann. They organize a birthday party for the terrified Stanley who insists it is not his birthday.

Director and Theatre faculty Dr. Eric Prince describes *The Birthday Party* as "funny, clever, and sinister by turns." Pinter's first full-length play, *The Birthday Party* opened in 1958 and bewildered and puzzled its first audiences, but then went on to dazzle and entertain, establishing itself as a classic of 20th century theatre.

Pinter comes from long tradition of playwrights who have concentrated on some of the more negative aspects of daily life and human ritual. In the mid-1950s in British theatre, there was an emergence of this voice, which was generally young, largely anti-establishment and prepared to shock. When *The Birthday Party* was first performed, Pinter was acclaimed as "the most original, disturbing and arresting talent in London."

Pinter has been awarded the Shakespeare Prize (Hamburg), the European Prize for Literature (Vienna), the Pirandello Prize (Palermo), the David Cohen British Literature Prize, the Laurence Olivier Award and the Moliere D'Honneur for lifetime achievement. In 1999, he was made a Companion of Literature by the Royal Society of Literature. He has received honorary degrees from fourteen universities. In 2005, awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, Pinter was praised as an artist "who in his plays uncovers the precipice under everyday prattle and forces entry into oppression's closed rooms."

CSU's production of this involved play provides students with unprecedented opportunities onstage and off, including working with guest professional costume and set designer Liam O'Brien. With its depth and complexity, the play also provides students the challenge of tackling major, difficult roles.

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