

Keswick Theatre Club presents

THE HEIGHT OF THE STORM

By Florian Zeller

Translated by Christopher Hampton



Weds 9 – Sat 12 April 2025
Studio, Theatre by the Lake, Keswick

This amateur production of THE HEIGHT OF THE STORM is presented
by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd on behalf of Samuel French Ltd.

THE PLAY

The Height of the Storm

The action takes place in the present day. It is late summer, in the Normandy village home of André and Madeleine. Their daughters, Anne and Élise, are visiting for the weekend.

Scene 1	Saturday morning
Scene 2	Saturday afternoon
Scene 3	Sunday morning
Epilogue	Sunday afternoon

Characters, in order of appearance:

Anne – the daughter

André – the father

Madeleine – the mother

Élise – the younger daughter

A woman

A man

Run time 1 hour 50 mins

including a 20-min interval between scenes 2 and 3

The author

Florian Zeller is France's foremost contemporary playwright, best known for his plays about family relationships. His most successful play, *The Father* (2012), was made into a film in 2020, starring Anthony Hopkins and Olivia Coleman. Zeller is also a successful novelist.

The translator

Christopher Hampton, who collaborated with Zeller on the screenplay for *The Father* is known for his own theatrical work, including *The Philanthropist* and *Sunset Boulevard*, for his translations of *The God of Carnage* and *Dangerous Liaisons*, and for his screenplays, which include *Atonement*.

The Father won a BAFTA and an Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I have long been a fan of the work of Florian Zeller. I saw his powerful drama *The Mother* in 2010 and soon after had the chance to see *The Father*, his moving study of ageing. Eager for more, I saw his entertaining comedies *Truth* and *The Lie*, which demonstrate his enormous versatility as a writer. *The Height of the Storm* exhibits characteristics of all of these.

The title of the play comes from a poem by René Char, a French poet and member of the Resistance:

At the height of the storm
There's always a bird to reassure us,
The unknown bird:
It sings and then it flies away.

Even in life's most difficult moments, comfort can be found, sometimes from unexpected sources. This play shows us a family dealing with ageing, dementia and death, but in a way that challenges our thinking about reality and the accuracy of memory.

As Zeller says, 'The play makes different scenarios cohabit ... The challenge for the director is to make it clear at each moment which scenario is being enacted. This takes the spectator on a dream-like journey through the multiple possibilities of the end of life.'

We hope you enjoy it.

Jonathan Vickers



THE CAST



ANDRÉ - Daryn Gates



MADELEINE - Helen Reed



ANNE – Annabel Hossell



ÉLISE – Sam Brockett



THE WOMAN – Shirley Muir



THE MAN – Marc McAdam

Our latest production has once again drawn remarkable acting talent from across our local community.

Daryn Gates – new to the club, Daryn's previous roles include Jean in *Miss Julie*, Wilby in *Sus*, Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*, Theseus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Franz Woyzeck in *Woyzeck*.

Helen Reed – played Bert the Cop, Angel Gloria and Violet Bick in our production of *It's a Wonderful Life*. She also acts with the Penrith Players, with roles including Margaret Thatcher in *Handbagged*.

Annabel Hossell – has played many parts for KTC, including the title role in *Miss Roach's War* and previously Edith in *Blithe Spirit* and Olga in *Three Sisters*, as well as acting in works by local playwright Jo Alberti.

Sam Brockett – new to the club; music lovers may have heard Sam's voice and guitar on Keswick's live music scene.

Shirley Muir – starred as Mary in *It's a Wonderful Life* and played the Jockey in our production of *Ladies' Day*. Also many roles, from the Angel of the Lord to an AI psychotherapist, for Derwentwater Drama Group.

Marc McAdam – played Joe in *Ladies' Day* and is also familiar to Keswick theatregoers from KAOS productions such as *Spamalot*.

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Director: **Jonathan Vickers**

Assistant director and production manager: **Karen Ray**

Wardrobe designer: **Debs Lester**

Stage tech: **Theatre by the Lake**

Thanks to:

Tash Binder – image design

Graham Kendall – poster design

Jocelyn Pye – publicity and programme

Theatre by the Lake Front of House and Marketing teams

NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR

Welcome to Theatre by the Lake's Studio where you are in for a treat with Keswick Theatre Club's latest production: *The Height Of The Storm*. But did you know that being involved in a drama group involves a lot of forward thinking?

We meet monthly to read plays for fun whilst casting an eye over something suitable to perform for your enjoyment. And already we are 'waiting in the wings' to start workshops on our Autumn production of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*.

We have also selected our Spring 2026 production which will be a challenging opportunity to stage *Shakespeare In Love*. We are all familiar with Shakespeare and most have seen the film with Gwyneth Paltrow so we are very excited to bring this spectacular to this very stage.

If you would like to be involved in any way with either of our future productions let me know. We would be delighted to welcome you to our happy theatre club.



Sharon Helling sharonahelling063@gmail.com



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Thank you to:

Keswick Photographic Society for the cast photos

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Oxfam Keswick for the crockery and homewares

Vintage of Keswick for the dresser

Booths Keswick for the daily mushrooms

Penrith Players for André's dressing gown

and the amazing volunteers at Theatre by the Lake

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ABOUT KESWICK THEATRE CLUB

We are a group of people who all love creating theatre.

New members are always welcome.

No experience required – everyone's experience is valued.

There are many ways for members to get involved:

Play readings – enjoy reading a play out loud together

Play group – social meetups to chat about plays

Workshops

Acting

Directing

Set design

Wardrobe

Marketing

Lighting design

Stage management

Sound design and live music

Our next production:

A Doll's House by Henrik Ibsen, 26-29 November 2025

Casting in June-July 2025

Why not give us a go? Non-members are welcome to attend one of our social events to get to know us. Find out what's coming up on facebook.com/keswicktheatreclub or Chinty's newsletter.

Contact: KTC secretary Eleanor Paxon paxoneleanor7@gmail.com

