

STILL ALICE



Adapted by Christine Mary Dunford
From the book by Lisa Genova

23 - 25 May 2024
Tivoli Theatre Wimborne

Director's Notes

HELLO, and welcome to the Tivoli Theatre for our production of *Still Alice*.

Based on the award-winning book by neuroscientist Lisa Genova, it shows us what it might feel like to be inside the mind of someone living with dementia.

I had a very special reason for wanting to direct this stage adaptation of *Still Alice*: my grandmother lives with the condition.

When I read the script, it helped me gain a new understanding of what my Nan must be feeling. It gives people with Alzheimer's a voice. It is a cleverly written play and I couldn't put it down. It had me gripped and I knew it was a play I needed to see brought to life.

Still Alice takes the audience on a journey from sympathy to empathy. It explores living with dementia and not dying from it. Using the magic of theatre, it shows Alzheimer's through the eyes of Alice as she adjusts to her new perspective on life. It's a powerful play with some light-hearted moments and beautiful scenes.

Of course, there are aspects of the play which are very sad. But I hope you don't find it depressing and you see clearer through the eyes of someone with dementia.

Any show is impossible to put on without the support of so many others. So I would like to thank those who have helped with set



and props and who have given up time to help bring this play together.

Special thanks to Nick Clark who took the lead in the building of the set and spent many hours making ideas come alive. His time, skills and patience have been truly above and beyond and we couldn't have done this without him.

I can't leave out and partners and families, who support the cast and crew in many ways.

This has been a wonderful play to put together. I am thankful to all those who made it possible. It wasn't without its challenges, but WDP are a team and have risen to all the challenges.

Still Alice is supporting Alzheimer's Society. I would like to say

thank you for all that they do to raise awareness and support those who are walking this difficult journey, and thanks to the groups that help people keep making special moments even if they don't become special memories.

Finally, I would like to say a very personal thank you to the lady who inspired me to want to do this show, my Nan.



Sali with her Nan

Sali Pike, Director

What is Dementia?

DEMENTIA is not a normal part of ageing and it's not just about forgetting things. It is a group of symptoms caused by different diseases that damage the brain, such as Alzheimer's.

The symptoms get worse over time and include memory loss; confusion and needing help with daily tasks; problems with language and understanding; and changes in behaviour.

One in three people born in the UK today will develop dementia in their lifetime. A recently published report from Carnall Farrar, commissioned by Alzheimer's Society, found there are currently around 982,000 people with dementia in the UK. This is projected to rise to 1.4 million people by 2040.

Dementia costs the UK £42 billion per year. This is set to rise sharply to £90 billion by 2040. 63% of the total cost of dementia is borne by patients and their families.

There are more than 70,000 people living with young-onset dementia – where symptoms develop before the age of 65.

The causes of young-onset, or early-onset dementia are similar to the diseases that usually cause dementia in older people. However, some causes, such as frontotemporal dementia, are more common in younger people. Dementia in younger people often has different symptoms, even when it's caused by the same diseases as in older people.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of early-onset dementia and may affect around 1 in 3 younger people with dementia. However, up to 2 in 3 older people with dementia have Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimer's disease develops when proteins build up in the brain to form structures called 'plaques' and 'tangles'. This causes brain cells to die and so affects functions controlled by the brain.

For most older people with Alzheimer's disease, the first symptom they notice is likely to be memory loss. However, in younger people with Alzheimer's disease, memory loss is less likely to be the first symptom.

Younger people are much more likely to have an 'atypical' form of Alzheimer's disease. The symptoms depend on the

specific form a person has. In posterior cortical atrophy the first symptoms are usually problems with understanding visual information, such as struggling to read or judge distances.

In logopenic aphasia the first symptoms are usually difficulties with language, such as problems finding the right word, or taking long pauses while they speak.

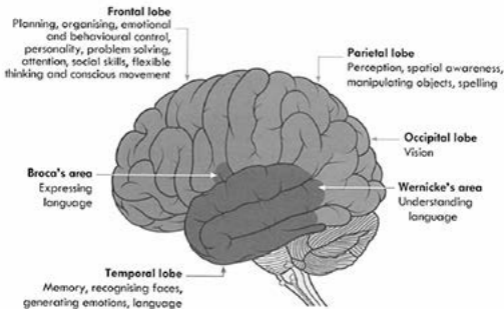
In behavioural/dysexecutive Alzheimer's disease the first symptoms are usually difficulties with planning and decision making, and behaving in socially inappropriate ways.

Up to 1 in 3 younger people with Alzheimer's disease have one of these forms, but only 1 in 20 older people with Alzheimer's disease have an atypical form.

There is currently no cure for dementia. However, there are treatments for the disease, including medication, that can help with a person's symptoms.

Research teams at University College London and Oxford University are about to carry out countrywide trials to identify accurate and quick blood tests that can provide earlier diagnosis of dementia.

The functions of the brain





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The Cast

Alice	JULIE SISSONS
Herself	MICHELLE BARTER
John	ANDY GILL
Lydia	SCARLETT DIXON
Thomas	CALUM HEARNE
Dr Tamara / Beth	KELLY WEBB
Dr Davis / Dan	CHRIS DURHAM

The play takes place over three years, from March 2010 to April 2013

Running time approximately 2 hours 30 minutes, including interval

Production Acknowledgements

This production would not have been possible without the generous help and support of Alzheimer's Society, BBC Radio Solent, Beacroft College, Daily Echo, Daisy Graphic, Fernhill Dementia Care Home, Gullivers Bookshop, Just Click Printing, Radio Wimborne, Stour and Avon Magazine, Tivoli Theatre, Viewpoint, Wimborne Dementia Friendly Community, Richard Cawte, Tony Feltham, Dee Hawes, Tracey Nicholls, Paul Senitt and Kevin Sissons

The Creative Team

Director	SALI PIKE
Stage Manager	ROB CORDING-COOK
Set Designers	COLIN PILE, NICK CLARK & SALI PIKE
Set Construction	NICK CLARK Assisted by members of the company
Sound & Projection	NICK CLARK & COLIN PILE
ASMs/Props	HAZEL LILLY STEVE SOUTAR LAUREN BAKER RICHARD NEAL
Book Cover	JUDY GARRETT
Costumes	TRACIE BILLINGTON-BEARDSLEY
Publicity & Programme	RICHARD NEAL
<i>For the Tivoli Theatre:</i>	
Technical & Production Manager	KYLE BEST
Assistant Stage Manager	CHANDLER WHITELOCK

Produced by Wimborne Drama Productions at the Tivoli Theatre, 23-25 May 2024. STILL ALICE was originally published by Simon and Schuster. STILL ALICE premiered at Lookingglass Theatre in Chicago, April 2013. This amateur production of STILL ALICE is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. The videotaping or making of electronic or other audio and/or visual recordings or streams of this production is strictly prohibited, a violation of United Kingdom Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 and an actionable offence.



Top left to right: Julie Sissons, Scarlett Dixon
Bottom left to right: Chris Durham, Kelly Webb



Top left to right: Calum Hearne, Julie Sissons, Andy Gill
Bottom left to right: Michelle Barter, Julie Sissons

Lisa Genova

LISA GENOVA, born in 1970, is an American neuroscientist, bestselling author and renowned public speaker.

Her first book, *Still Alice*, published in 2007, explored the complex reality of early-onset Alzheimer's and was on *The New York Times* best seller list for more than 59 weeks. In 2014 it was adapted into a movie starring

Julianne Moore, who won an Oscar for her highly acclaimed portrayal of Alice Howland.

Prior to the film adaptation, the book was adapted for the stage by Christine Mary Dunford for the Lookingglass Theatre Company in Chicago in the United States in 2013.

Genova has written several other novels, each highlighting a different neurological condition, including *Every Note Played* and *Love Anthony*. Her most recent book, and her first non-fiction work, published in 2021, is *Remember: The Science of Memory and the Art of Forgetting*. She is currently working on another novel in which the main character has bipolar disorder.

Prior to becoming an author, Genova did research at Massachusetts General Hospital East, Yale Medical School, McLean Hospital, and the National Institutes of Health. She also taught neuroanatomy at Harvard Medical School. She received a PhD in neuroscience from Harvard University, and graduated from Bates College with a BS degree in biopsychology.



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WIMBORNE
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WITNESS

FOR THE PROSECUTION

By **Agatha Christie**

24 - 26 October 2024

Tivoli Theatre Wimborne

EVENINGS 7.30PM, £17.50 SAT MATINEE 2.30PM, £15.50

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