

Alan Bennett Box Set: Forty Years on; Habeas Corpus; Kafka's Dick; The Madness of George III; The Lady in the Van; The History Boys

Alan Bennett

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Six glorious plays by Alan Bennett, collected together for the first time in this celebratory box set. Forty Years On premiered at the Apollo Theatre, London, in 1968. "Alan Bennett's most gloriously funny play...a brilliant, youthful perception of a nation in decline, as seen through the eyes of a home-grown school play ...a classic". (Daily Mail). Habeas Corpus premiered at the Lyric Theatre, London, in 1973. "After two elegiac comedies about the decline of old England, Mr Bennett has now written a gorgeously vulgar but densely plotted farce that is a downright celebration of sex and the human body ... a combination of hurtling action with verbal brilliance". (Guardian). Kafka's Dick premiered at the Royal Court Theatre, London, in 1986. "Alan Bennett is a courageous and gifted writer: no one since Shaw has had the guts to include a finale set in Heaven which resembles some awful publishing party-cum-tea-dance at the Savoy, or mix up so many fundamentally serious ideas about the importance - or lack of it - of art and artists in our gossip-prone, disordered lives with so much engaging theatrical capering". (Time Out). The Madness of George III premiered at the National Theatre, London, in 1991). "If you have tears, prepare to shed them now. Alan Bennett's wonderful play has finally arrived in the West End ...and there are many moments that cut at the heart like a knife. We think of Bennett as a great comic writer, and so he is, but he can also be the most moving of dramatists". (Daily Telegraph). The Lady in the Van with Maggie Smith opened at the Queen's Theatre, London, in 1999. "We have, in the nick of time, a Play of the Year: Alan Bennett's The Lady in the Van is a wonderfully bittersweet comic diary of the years in which a lethally dotty and very smelly old bat parked her unroadworthy vehicle in Bennett's Camden garden, thereby providing him with a roughly equal amount of journalistic copy and guilty landlordly irritation". (Spectator). The History Boys premiered at the National Theatre, London, in 2004. "Brilliantly funny, with lines that we will, I hope, be quoting for years to come and several show-stopping vignettes. Bennett is still naughty, impish, endlessly ironic. But by the end tears are as near as laughter. The History Boys is moving, disquieting: one follows it with a heart brimful...This is Bennett's first play this millennium, and it more than repays the wait; I think it his finest work in decades". (Financial Times).



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