

PRE-SHOW IN-THE-KNOW

FAST FACTS

TITLE:

After Dinner by Andrew Bovell

ABOUT THE PLAY:

They just want to dance with somebody.

After Dinner is a poignant and hilarious collision of lonely hearts, sex, friendship and Friday night drinks. A suburban pub, circa 1987. Paula, Monika and Dympie are going to paint the town red... or maybe just a deep shade of embarrassment.

Paula's frocked up, it's Monika's first night out in years and Dympie just wants a table with a good view of the band. Semi-eligible blokes Gordon and Stephen are shaking off the office and revealing their own peccadillos while they're at it. Between the Chardonnay, the oysters and the odd Valium things are bound to loosen up!

Playwright Andrew Bovell (*The Secret River*, *Lantana*) is one of Australia's finest writers. In *After Dinner*, his first play from 1988, he exhibits the sure hand of a gifted wordsmith. His beautifully observed characters and wincingly funny one-liners reveal the timeless trials of friendship and singledom, as well as being a delicious reminder of the less than timeless trials of perms and skinny ties that were the 1980s.

Featuring the comedic talents of Helen Thomson (*Mrs Warren's Profession*), Josh McConville (*Noises Off*), Anita Hegh (*The Secret River*), Glenn Hazeldine (*Perplex*) and Rebecca Massey (*Vere (Faith)*).

In this comedic gem, some will relive memories. Many will be reminded of friends and lovers. You'll all know the music... And a few might even recognise a little bit of you.

CHARACTERS

Dympie – Rebecca Massey
Paula – Anita Hegh
Monika – Helen Thomson
Gordon – Glenn Hazeldine
Stephen – Josh McConville

STYLE

Heightened Realism, Comedy of Manners, Black Comedy

RUNNING TIME

1 hour and 45 minutes including interval

ACTIVE AUDIENCE

THINK ABOUT:

- The existential undertones of the characters waiting at the bistro for life, or love, to happen to them
- The mixture of styles in Bovell's writing - Comedy of Manners, Black Comedy and Heightened Realism
- The context of the 1980s. Greed, yuppies, power dressing, AIDS
- Friendship, loneliness and the need for human connection

WATCH FOR:

- The bistro decor of the 1980s and the 1980s fashion
- The satire of middle class Australia. Mispronunciation of words and discussion about food
- The music at the end as a metaphor for each character
- The fussing over social rituals - turning them in to social horrors including choosing a table and paying the bill

MEMORABLE MOMENTS:

- Helen Thomson's monologue after she returns from the bathroom
- Dympie and Paula passing the stockings
- Josh McConville's entrance as Stephen
- Gordon's slow reaction to Stephen's jokes and all-round awkwardness