

# PRE-SHOW IN-THE-KNOW

## TITLE

*Accidental Death of an Anarchist*

Adapted by Francis Greenslade and Sarah Giles

Directed by Sarah Giles

## CURRICULUM LINKS

### Drama Stage 5: Dramatic Forms and Styles

Comedy

Farce

Commedia dell'arte

Clowning

## PLOT SYNOPSIS

A man has fallen to his death from a police station window. Did he jump or was he pushed? The cops want a cover-up, but first they have to contend with an unlikely detective – a so-called ‘maniac’ with a knack for impersonation.

Donning a series of increasingly ridiculous guises, the ‘maniac’ professes to help the police, but in truth runs circles around the hapless officers as he conducts his counter-inquiry, revealing damning inconsistencies in their story.

It’s a glorious battle of the individual against the establishment, of anarchy against tyranny, of freedom and justice against corruption and ineptitude.

Written by Italian Nobel Laureate Dario Fo in 1970, this farce with a political sting in its tail has become an absurdist classic.

## CAST AND CHARACTERS

Caroline Brazier – Superintendant

Julie Forsyth – Insepector Bertozzo

Bessie Holland – Insepector Pisani

Annie Maynard – Maria Feletti/Constable 1

Amber McMahon – The Maniac

Susie Youssef – Constable 2

## STYLE

- Farce
- Physical Theatre / Clowning / Commedia dell'arte

## RUNNING TIME

2 hours and 6 minutes, including interval

## THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR

- Physical gags
- A song and Dance routine
- An exciting exit with The Maniac
- Comical exits and entrances
- The new character of a cleaning lady

## ALL FEMALE CAST

Sarah Giles’ creative vision for the play was to direct the play with an all female cast. After her decision to cast Amber McMahon as The Maniac, the vision for the production became clear. Giles thought about what it would mean for a woman to play the role of the Anarchist, historically played by a man. All the actresses in the play, dress in male clothing and take on male persona’s and characteristics which adds complexity and another layer to the play.