



Plays 2

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Jon Fosse

Photo: Tom A. Kolstad

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These seasonal plays are typical Fosse, imbuing mundane situations with an almost hypnotic intensity.

A Summer's Day (written in 1997)

Dream of Autumn (written in 1998)

Meanwhile the Lights Go Down and Everything Becomes Black (written in 1999)

Visits (written in 1999)

Sleep My Baby Sleep

Winter

Afternoon

In *A Summer's Day*, an old widow remembers the day, many years before, when her husband went out to sea in a terrible storm and never returned. Two old friends reunite in a play whose action takes place in two time periods. It revives and dramatises the emotions of love, both now and in the distant past.

In *Dream of Autumn* Fosse tells the story of ordinary lives that take surprising turns. In a series of continuous but chronologically distinct scenes, the play shows a man unexpectedly coming across an old friend: she will become his second wife, and cause him to fall out with his family. While the encounter gives rise to tense scenarios that drive the narrative, the presence of death gives contour to the love and life within the play. *Dream of Autumn* is a timeless poetic story about the everyday and miraculous.

The short play *Meanwhile the Lights Go Down and Everything Becomes Black*, displays Fosse's characteristic compression of theatrical time and space at its most concentrated. Here, Fosse explores the dilemmas of an errant husband, his young lover and his family.

In the oblique but psychologically penetrating *Visits*, a withdrawn teenager, apparently upset by the attention of her mother's boyfriend, turns to her brother for help. In order to unravel what is happening, he tries to get the boyfriend to open up and tell his own story.

In *Sleep My Baby Sleep*, three people are in a strange unnamed place; through visual and linguistic association they try to decipher their predicament. As is common in Fosse's plays, the characters don't have names; in this play, it emphasises the mystical character of their dilemma.

In *Winter* a fascinating but mercurial woman tries to seduce a businessman,

but once he has given up his family and career, he realises he may have mistaken her intentions. It is a chance intersection between strangers who become friends, lovers and strange sort of companions.

In *Afternoon*, characters come and go in a flat that is for sale; they will never understand each other; someone will always insist on one thing, while others will insist on something else. "A meditation on time and the fragility of the human condition" (HAYman Theatre Company) in which characters struggle to understand themselves and to embrace life.

Jon Fosse

Jon Fosse is widely considered one of the world's most important living writers. Born in 1959 in Strandebarm, a small village in the western part of Norway, he lives today in the Grotten, an honorary residence, as well as in Hainburg, Austria, and Frekhaug, Norway.

Fosse has received numerous prizes, both in Norway and internationally, and he is mentioned increasingly often as a likely contender for the Nobel Prize. He has currently finishing a major seven-volume work of what he calls "slow prose". *Septology* consists of three volumes: *The Other Name: Septology I - II* was published in 2019 to international praise and longlisted for the *Booker International Prize*. *I Is Another: Septology III - V* was published autumn 2020 and *A New Name: Septology VI - VII* will be published in autumn 2021.