**ENTERTAINING MR SLOANE**

Welcome to this introduction to the Young Vic’s *Entertaining Mr Sloane* by Joe Orton, directed by Nadia Fall.

The audio described performances are on Saturday the 18th of October at 2:30pm with a touch tour at 1pm and Thursday the 23rd of October at 7.30pm, with a touch tour at 6pm. Please arrive at the box office ten minutes before the advertised start time for the touch tour.

The performance lasts for 2 hours and 30 minutes, including a 20-minute interval and will be described by Eleanor Margolies and Miranda Yates.

The Young Vic’s website says: When lonely Kath offers the mysterious Mr Sloane a room to rent in the family home, her businessman brother Ed does not approve. After all, what will people say? But soon, he becomes equally taken with the charismatic young Sloane. Only their old Dadda remains wary, convinced that he recognises this stranger. What begins as a convenient living arrangement spirals into a dangerous game of desire and deceit.’ Nadia Fall directs Joe Orton’s 1964 play.

The Young Vic’s website warns that the production includes loud music and sound effects, haze, the smoking of herbal cigarettes, and the use of strobe lights for three minutes at the beginning of Act 2. A pre-show information document giving details of potentially troubling content can be downloaded from the Young Vic’s website at [www.youngvic.org/whats-on/entertaining-mr-sloane](http://www.youngvic.org/whats-on/entertaining-mr-sloane).

There’s a cast of four actors, three men and one woman, who each play a single character throughout.

**Kath** is a slim white woman who says in the play she’s forty-one. She has short, ash-blonde hair styled in a soft 1960s curl and she wears carefully applied makeup. Her expressive face and bright eyes give her a mix of warmth and weariness. Kath’s clothes blend homely femininity and a desire to look proper with an undercurrent of sensuality. When we first meet her she’s wearing a short sleeved tea-dress in cream with a bold floral design of peach toned roses and green foliage. Around her waist she wears a frilled white half apron decorated with pink embroidered flowers. A girlish touch is added by teaming her cream T-bar court shoes with frilly white ankle socks. A slightly looser fitting dress in pale blue worn later has a motif of woodland trees, she also wears ba sheer nylon baby doll nightdress with a floral pattern in pink and green, falling to just above the knee. Kath’s moves with a blend of bustling energy and nervous self-consciousness, often stepping closer to others than is comfortable, or leaning towards the person she’s addressing, eager to please.

**Ed,** Kath’s brother, is a white man in his late fifties, of medium build, with short, greying hair neatly combed back from his temples. His features are sharply defined, with a long, narrow face, high forehead, and the even tone of his skin hints at careful self-presentation. Ed carries himself upright, with an air of self-importance and contained tension - a man who takes pride in order and control. He dresses smartly, with old-fashioned fastidiousness, in a yellowish brown tweed three piece suit with a striped olive green tie held by a silver tiepin and polished brown lace ups. A white pocket square is neatly poised in his left breast pocket. Ed’s movements are controlled and deliberate, he paces the lounge with measured steps, with shoulders squared, and clipped gestures. He maintains physical distance at first, but his composure breaks when emotions surface; then, his movements become abrupt or jerky. His physical presence embodies authority and unease. He is often poised with a cigarette hanging from his lips.

**Kemp,** Kath and Ed’s father, is often referred to by Kath as the Dadda. He’s a slightly built white man in his seventy’s with a lined, sharp featured face and thinning messy white hair. Standing shorter than his children, he walks slightly stooped, and moves quickly with the nervousness of someone not wanting to get in the way. His clothes are threadbare and ill-fitting - crumpled grey suit trousers and waistcoat, with a creased blue-grey shirt with the frayed collar undone, without a tie. Over this he wears a thin brown wool cardigan and on his feet are a pair of well-worn tartan slippers. Kemp has a twitchy energy, fiddling with his hands or gesturing irritably and he peers closely at others from behind his black framed specs, eyes narrowing suspiciously with a wiry, defiant alertness.

**Mr Sloane** is in his thirties, of medium height with an athletic build, brown skin and a slightly grown out afro haircut. His large, dark eyes are striking and sometimes lend a softness to his expression, an openness that draws others in, but they can also blaze with intensity, emanating a sense of danger and unpredictability. The shift between warmth and menace conveyed through a lingering look or a slight narrowing of his eyes. Initially Sloane’s clothes are neat, a conventional after-work outfit for a middle-class man in the early 1960s: under a zip-up windcheater, he wears a pressed white shirt and neatly knotted dark tie with a sky blue knitted tank top, straight cut grey trousers and polished black lace ups. After the interval he takes on an entirely different look in snug fitting black leather trousers, a matching leather waistcoat that is laced up at the back, shiny black biker boots, and a black leather peaked chauffeur’s cap. The waistcoat reveals tattoos on his arms. Sloane has a supple almost feline energy, lounging easily, standing, or sitting, calm and watchful, with deliberate composure while others fuss around him.

The play takes place entirely in the lounge of Kath’s house. We are told that it is an isolated house built in the middle of a rubbish dump, and when we first come into the space we are confronted with an incomprehensible jumble of grey lumber, heaped up against the sides of the circular raised stage, and also suspended from above.

Between the stalls audience benches and the stage, there is a tangle of old ladders, buckets, metal bedsteads, broken folding chairs, exhaust pipes, tin baths – the debris of discarded lives. While all this is clearly junk, what hangs above seems more intact – pieces of furniture that might be tucked away in an attic or put on sale in an antique shop - wooden chairs, birdcages, lampshades, a deckchair, a wheelbarrow, a child’s cot, a wheelchair, an ironing board, a wooden highchair, an old fashioned pram with large wheels, a couple of wooden airers, and a large wooden coffin. Every item is the same shade of sooty, gunmetal grey, removing any sense of warmth or memory.

Threaded through the suspended furniture, there are half a dozen bare bulbs on cables that slowly rise and fall, apparently of their own volition. When the play begins, the furniture flies up forming a dense knot about four metres above the stage - out of reach but never out of mind.

The circular playing area is about eight metres in diameter; during the interval it revolves shifting the position of the furniture relative to the audience. The floor is covered in a bright and loudly patterned carpet in red, blue, and yellow – an eruption of colour in the otherwise monochromatic room, and its furniture in the same gunmetal grey as the junk. The furniture is spaced out in four areas around the edge of the stage. The carefully selected items give the impression of a room full of Victorian clutter.

Most important is the narrow chaise longue, covered in grey velvet with a round bolster. Behind the head of the chaise is a small table holding a lamp with a tasselled shade and beside it, a wooden sewing box on legs.

Further round, a small side table supports a sooty grey Dresden statuette. A small drawer holds items like medicine, lipstick etc and there’s a basin tucked away on a shelf underneath.

In the third area is what Kath refers to as the dresser, a small cupboard holding crockery. On top is a lamp with a globe-shaped shade, and a gramophone. A metal rack of dusty forty-fives is on the floor on one side of the dresser, a black vase on the other. Finally, a piano stool with an upholstered seat provides further seating and storage for any items that need to be hastily tidied away.

At the opposite side of the auditorium from the audience entrance, a narrow walkway leads from the lounge, between rows of audience seating, to a doorway out to the rest of the house. Sometimes light spills out through this doorway, illuminating Sloane with an unearthly green light. Caught in this light, he seems to slow down, moving in slow motion, expressing his inner life in sculptural muscular poses.

**Cast and Production Credits**

Kath is played by **Tamzin Outhwaite**

Her brother Eddie is played by **Daniel Cerqueira**

Their father is played by **Christopher Fairbank**

And the mysterious Mr Sloane is played by **Jordan Stephens**

Set & Costume Designer - **Peter McKintosh**

Lighting Designer - **Richard Howell**

Sound Designer - **Tinging Dong**

Movement Director - **James Cousins**

*Entertaining Mr Sloane* is written by **Joe Orton** and directed by **Nadia Fall**

That’s the end of this audio introduction to *Entertaining Mr Sloane*. If you have further questions or would like to book for the touch tour, please contact the Young Vic box office on 020 7922 2922.