

# A voyage round my father

73  
By JOHN MORTIMER  
Directed by  
ANDREW WARWICK  
With Donald Whittle  
Tim Butchard  
and full supporting cast

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PRESENTED BY  
**NAIROBI CITY PLAYERS**  
KENYA NATIONAL THEATRE

1973

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## **NAIROBI CITY PLAYERS**

In September 1956 an "acting group" was formed to be known as the Nairobi City Players, and in its Constitution set down the following aims and objects:—

- (a) Regularly to present theatrical productions of a good dramatic and artistic standard by utilising and co-ordinating the best available acting talent, producers, set designers and technical stage assistants.
- (b) Towards the fulfilment of (a) above, to be unstinting in the cost of production, subject to the limit set by the Standing Committee.
- (c) To take all necessary steps to encourage the drama and to improve the facilities available for theatrical productions.

The City Players have adhered rigidly to these aims from their formation and since that time have presented at the National Theatre, Nairobi, a total of 66 productions including 17 full scale musicals. (figures include the current production).

The City Players are controlled by a **STANDING COMMITTEE** as follows:—

Peter Pearce (*Chairman*)  
Bryan Epsom (*Business Manager*)  
Gordon Purcell (*Treasurer*)  
Ken Latham (*Executive Member*)  
Rurik Ronsky

Walter Hinds  
Tony Bishop  
Benny Goodman  
Tim Butchard  
Vic Francis

In addition to the Committee there is an Associate Membership limited to 50 Members.

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KENYA NATIONAL THEATRE

**THE NAIROBI CITY PLAYERS**

*present*

**“A VOYAGE  
ROUND MY  
FATHER”**

**A Play by**

**JOHN MORTIMER**

**Directed by**

**ANDREW WARWICK**

The play was first presented at Greenwich Theatre in 1971. It was subsequently presented at the Haymarket Theatre, London in August, 1971.

## ABOUT THE PLAY

It sometimes happens that a play which started its life on television suffers when transferred to the stage. A major exception to this is surely John Mortimer's "A Voyage Round My Father". Conceived for television (like much of Mr. Mortimer's work), first staged at Greenwich, then re-cast and re-directed for the West End, it works perfectly in the theatre. This is probably in part due to the fact that theatregoers have become more acclimatised of late to a fragmented, episodic structure in stage drama. It is above all a tribute to the richness of Mortimer's portrait of his own testily eccentric father. He genuinely circumnavigates the character viewing him with a mixture of profound affection and critical detachment and showing both the oddities that made him endearing and the steadfast refusal to admit to his blindness that placed an intolerable burden on those closest to him.

The form of the play is interesting. Ostensibly it is a straight forward autobiography showing the dramatist himself at various stages of his early life. But while it is the son who progresses as a character in the course of the play, it is the scarcely developing father who is throughout the focus of attention. Impressive is the manner in which Mortimer suggests that there is a controlled pain and resentment just beneath the comic surface (and there is plenty of comedy in this play). Although his own character remains a shadowy figure in the play, Mortimer tells us more about himself than he may perhaps realise. In fact one of the play's fascinations is what it reveals about Mortimer's strengths and also weaknesses as a writer. One of his greatest qualities — and one that made him particularly adept at the short play — is his ability to evoke a place or a character through a lightning descriptive sketch. And in this play we learn that one of his earliest tasks was to paint verbal pictures for his blind father of everything they encountered on walks. Few dramatists have provided such fascinating source-material about their own development as Mr. Mortimer has in this work. A London critic on summing up the production expressed the hope that John Mortimer might, in some future play, "take us on a voyage round himself". We echo these sentiments.

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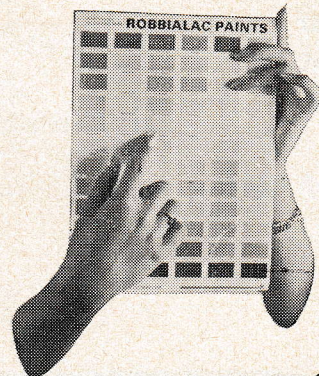
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# 'A VOYAGE ROUND

By  
**JOHN MOR**  
CAST

<i>Father</i>	.....	DONALD WHITTLE
<i>Son</i>	.....	TIM BUTCHARD
<i>Mother</i>	.....	CYNTHIA WEBSTER
<i>Son (as a boy)</i>	.....	MARK THOMPSON
<i>Iris</i>	.....	ANNE MARIE McDONNELL
<i>Ringer Lean</i>	.....	DAVID HANCOCK
<i>Headmaster</i>	.....	ROBERT KINGSTON-DAVIES
<i>Reigate</i>	.....	FREDDIE ACHIENG
<i>Ham</i>	.....	DAVID HANCOCK
<i>Japhet</i>	.....	KEN TURNER
<i>Mr. Reigate</i>	.....	NGURI FIDELIS
<i>Mrs. Reigate</i>	.....	ROSEMARY GATONYE
<i>Matron</i>	.....	HEATHER STEADMAN
<i>Miss Cox</i>	.....	JULIE ANDERSON
<i>Miss Baker</i>	.....	GILL HINES
<i>Boustead</i>	.....	KEN TURNER
<i>Judge</i>	.....	ROBERT KINGSTON-DAVIES
<i>Clerk of Court</i>	.....	NGURI FIDELIS

Directed  
**ANDREW W**



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# UND MY FATHER'

By

**MORTIMER**

## CAST

<i>Thong</i>	.....	RAY WILKIN
<i>Doris</i>	.....	HEATHER STEADMAN
<i>Sparks</i>	.....	RAY WILKIN
<i>Film Director</i>	.....	DAVID HANCOCK
<i>Camera Man</i>	.....	KEN TURNER
<i>First A.T.S. Girl</i>	.....	GILL HINES
<i>Second A.T.S. Girl</i>	.....	JULIE ANDERSON
<i>Elizabeth</i>	.....	BEVERLEY HURD
<i>George</i>	.....	ROBERT KINGSTON-DAVIES
<i>Social Worker (Miss Ferguson)</i>	.....	JULIE ANDERSON
<i>Mr. Morrow</i>	.....	DAVID HANCOCK
<i>Witness</i>	.....	HEATHER STEADMAN
<i>Two Children</i>	.....	MARK THOMPSON ANNE MARIE McDONNELL
<i>Doctor</i>	.....	KEN TURNER

Directed by

**W WARWICK**

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## FOR THE NAIROBI CITY PLAYERS

*Stage Manager* ..... VIC FRANCIS  
*Assistant Stage Manager* ..... ANNE FRANCIS  
*Assisted by* ..... John Baggaley, Douglas Beard,  
Francis Mbaya, Livingstone Njoroge  
*Set Designed by* ..... ROB BAIN  
*Construction Crew* ..... John Baggaley, Douglas Beard, Chris Cook, Peter  
Crampton, Arthur Docherty, Vic Francis, Anne Francis,  
Howard Francis, Dean Francis, Maureen Fox, Francis  
Mbaya, Joan Stally, Livingstone Njoroge, John Tyson.  
*Property Mistress* ..... MAUREEN FOX  
*Assisted by* ..... Jill Purcell

### (All back stage arrangements under the organisation of Stage Operators and Technical Specialists)

*Production Secretary* ..... JOAN STALLY  
*Costumes by* ..... CHERRY HEYWOOD-JONES  
*Assisted by* ..... Trixie Bignell, Shirley Bishop, Gill Hines  
*Lighting by* ..... BILL KING  
*Assisted by* ..... Jim Rushin  
*Production Secretary* ..... LIZ BAGGALEY  
*Sound Recordist* ..... KEN LATHAM  
*Assisted by* ..... Fiona McKenzie and Peter Sutton  
*Business Manager* ..... BRYAN EPSOM  
*Publicity* ..... BRYAN EPSOM and PETER PEARCE  
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# PAST PRODUCTIONS

## BY NAIROBI CITY PLAYERS

- 1956 "The Love of Four Colonels" by Peter Ustinov.
- 1957 "The Man Who Came to Dinner" by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman  
"Ring Round The Moon" by Jean Anouilh.  
"Payment Deferred" by Jeffrey Dell.
- 1958 "Romanoff and Juliet" by Peter Ustinov.  
"Two Gentlemen of Soho" by A. P. Herbert.  
(Winning Entry Kenya Drama Festival, 1958)  
"Carrington V. C." by Dorothy and Campbell Christie.  
"Will Any Gentleman" by Vernon Sylvaine.
- 1959 "Rope" by Patrick Hamilton.  
"You Can't Take It With You" by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman.  
"The Paragon" by Roland and Michael Pertwee.
- 1960 "The Diary of Anne Frank" by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett.  
"Six Characters In Search of An Author" by Pirandello.  
"A Farrago" comprising  
    "The Proposal" by Chekhov.  
    "Uneasy Lies The Head . . ." from Shakespeare.  
    "Red Peppers" by Noel Coward.
- 1961 "The King and I" by Rodgers and Hammerstein.  
"The Caine Mutiny Court Martial" by Herman Wouk.  
"The House by the Lake" by Hugh Mills.  
"The Bespoke Overcoat" by Wolf Mankowitz.  
(Winning Entry Kenya Drama Festival, 1961)  
"The Hole" by N. F. Simpson. (Drama Festival Entry, 1961)
- 1962 "Caesar and Cleopatra" by George Bernard Shaw.  
"The Long and The Short and The Tall" by Willis Hall.  
"Men Without Shadows" by Jean Paul Sartre.  
(Placed Third Winning Entry Kenya Drama Festival, 1962)  
"No Fixed Abode" by Clive Exton. (Drama Festival Entry, 1962)
- 1963 "See How They Run" by Philip King.  
"Annie Get Your Gun" by Irving Berlin, Herbert and Dorothy Fields.  
"Irma La Douce" by Marguerite Monnot and Alexandre Breffort.  
Excerpts from "St. Joan" by George Bernard Shaw.  
(Placed Second Winning Entry Kenya Drama Festival 1963)  
"The Resounding Tinkle" by N. F. Simpson. (Drama Festival Entry, 1963)

## Past Productions continued

- 1964 "South Pacific" by Rodgers and Hammerstein.  
"Ross" by Terence Rattigan.  
"The Valiant" by Holworthy Hall and Robert Middlemass.  
(Winning Entry Kenya Drama Festival, 1964)  
"The Scar" by Rebecca Njau.  
(Placed Third Winning Entry Kenya Drama Festival, 1964  
and also Best Original Play)  
"Oklahoma!" by Rodgers and Hammerstein.
- 1965 "The Country Wife" by William Wycherley.  
"The Duchess of Malfi" by John Webster.  
(Placed Joint Third Winning Entry Kenya Drama Festival, 1965)  
"The Wizard of Oz" by Frank Baum, Harold Arlen and E. Y. Harburg.
- 1966 "A View From the Bridge" by Arthur Miller.  
"The Man Who Came to Dinner" (revival) by Moss Hart and  
George S. Kaufman.
- 1967 "Twelve Angry Men" by Reginald Rose.  
A Double Bill of —  
"Lunch Hour" by John Mortimer.  
"One Way Pendulum" by N. F. Simpson.  
"The Sound of Music" by Rodgers and Hammerstein.
- 1968 "A Streetcar Named Desire" by Tennessee Williams.  
"Guys and Dolls" by Frank Loesser, Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows.  
"My Fair Lady" by Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe.
- 1969 "The Affair" by Ronald Millar.  
"How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying" by Frank Loesser  
and Abe Burrows.  
"After the Fall" by Arthur Miller.  
"Kiss Me Kate" by Cole Porter and Bella & Sam Spewack
- 1970 "The Magistrate" by Sir Arthur Wing Pinero.  
A Double Bill of —  
"The Dock Brief" by John Mortimer.  
"The Real Inspector Hound" by Tom Stoppard.  
"The Lion and the Jewel" by Wole Soyinka.  
(In association with the National Theatre Company of Kenya)  
"The Pajama Game" by Richard Adler, Jerry Ross, George Abbot and  
Richard Bissell.
- 1971 "Hadrian VII" by Peter Luke.  
"Fiddler on the Roof" by Joseph Stein, Jerry Boch and Sheldon Harnick.  
"Kismet" by Robert Wright, George Forrest, Charles Lederer, Luther Davies.
- 1972 "Under Milk Wood" by Dylan Thomas.  
"Salad Days" by Julian Slade and Dorothy Reynolds.  
"Saint Joan" by George Bernard Shaw.  
"Hello, Dolly!" by Michael Stewart & Jerry Herman.
- 1973 "Conduct Unbecoming" by Barry England.  
"Man of La Mancha" by Dale Wasserman, Mitch Leigh and Joe Darion.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE NAIROBI CITY PLAYERS wish to express their appreciation and thanks to:—

Mr. Justice Hancock	)	
Mr. John Silvester	)	
Mr. Peter Hewitt	)	For the loan of legal gowns and wigs
Mr. Michael Aronson	)	
Mr. Amos Wako	)	

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