KANATA THEATRE GROUP

PRESENTS

HUNTING STUART

by ≈ ROBERTSON DAVIES

EARL OF MARCH SCHOOL

THURS. FRI. & SATURDAY
MARCH 7, 8 & 9th

8.30 P.M.

TICKETS $1.50, STUDENTS $1.00

CALL 836-5201

HUNTING STEWART

ROBERTSON DAVIES

DIRECTOR - DEWI WILLIAMS
SET DESIGN - RON. W. MASLIN.

Standard Feb 21 1974

Kanata Theatre Group

Tickets are now available for the Kanata Theatre Group's next major production, "Hunting Stuart", by Robertson Davies.

This Canadian play, a comedy-fantasy, is directed by Dewi Williams. The nucleus of the play is the reincarnation of Prince Charlie through an Ottawa public servant.

"Hunting Stuart" will be performed March 7th, 8th and 9th at the Earl of March high school. Curtain time is 8.30 pm.

For tickets, call Sally Rose at 592-1013 (evenings) — or for general information, call 836-5301.

Students from W Erskine Johnston elementary school will be selling soft drinks and candy in the foyer of the high school during intermission to raise money for their "Project Edmonton"

Buy a soft drink — and give them your support!

An interview with two of the cast of "Hunting Stuart" can be seen on Cable 3 TV, Feb 26, 6 pm and Mar 6 at 6.45 pm.

Kanata Theatre Group

Canadian Play Next for Kanata Theatre Group

The Canadian play, "Hunting Stuart" by Robertson Davies, will be performed March 7th, 8th and 9th by the Kanata Theatre Group.

A comedy-fantasy, directed by Dewi Williams, "Hunting Stuart" centres around Henry Benedict, an Ottawa public servant, who is portrayed by Laurence Thornton. Heather Walt plays the role of his wife, Lilian.

Other members of the cast are Liane Freedman as Mrs Clementina Izzard; Bob Knight as Dr Homer Shrubsole; Marcia Caple as Dr Maria Clementina Sobieska; Andrea Boyd as Caroline Stuart and Craig Moore as Fred Lewis.



KANATA THEATRE GROUP

In rehearsal for the Kanata Theatre Group;s performance of "Hunting Stuart" are Heather Walt and Laurence Thornton. Mr Thornton portrays Henry Benedict Stuart, an Ottawa public servant, while Mrs. Walt plays the role of his wife, Lilian. "Hunting Stuart" runs March 7th, 8th and 9th at the Earl of March high school, Kanata, 8:30 pm.



Two members of the Kanata Theatre Group Laurence Thornton and Marcia Caple in rehearsal for "Hunting Stuart", to be performed March 7th, 8th & 9th at the Earl of March high school, Kanata, 8:30 p.m.

Kanata Review

KANATA THEATRE GROUP
presents
Hunting Stuart
BY ROBERTSON DAVIES
Earl of March High School, Kanata
March 7, 8, 9, 1974 — 8:30 p.m.

Adults - $1.50
Students - $1.00

№ 458

Standard Feb 21st 1974



Laurence Thorton and Andrea Boyd rehearse a scene from Robertson Davie's "Hunting Stuart" to be presented by the Kanata Theatre Group, March 7, 8, 9.

KANATA THEATRE GROUP

FIFTH SEASON
1973 — 1974

THE STUART.



















STILL STUART.

KANATA

Jeremy Freedman, 15, Reviews Local Play

Dear Sir

My name is Jeremy Freedman. I'm 15 years of age, and I am very interested in journalism and the stage. I am writing you in light of these interests, because I have become very enthusiastic in doing critiques on plays, and have noticed that your paper does not include major articles on the presentations made by the Kanata Theatre Group, or at least not from an analytical point of view. I am not interested in just knocking the performances, but merely writing my opinions about them.

I do this taking into consideration that the plays are amateur productions, and that the actors and actresses have spent many long hours practising for what is hoped to be a successful show. My reviews are written through the eyes of the viewer, the person in the audience, and would give and express the opinions of an avid fan of the theatre.

What I have done, is write a critique on "Hunting Stuart", which has most recently performed, and I will let you judge it from there.

HUNTING STUART

The evening opens up with bagpipes playing in the foyer, which was an ingenius idea, as it added effect to the Scottish background of the Stuart family, which was of Scottish descent.

When the playing had ceased, the set was revealed to us, which was actually the only poo point of the whole evening. In content it was excellent, but it was too crowded, with too many unnecessary objects cluttering the stage. However, after this, everything went straight uphill.

The entire show is set in the principal room in the apartment of Henry Stuart, who is the major character in this performance. The play starts off with some very realistic chit-chat between a mother (Mrs. Stuart) and her daughter. The mother was played by Heather Walt, while the daughter was played by Andrea Boyd.

Heather Walt was very good, as she had a very demanding part, but there were times when she wasn't totally believable, especially when an extremely emotional outburst was required. Miss Boyds' performance was excellent, and shows that she has tremendous promise for the future.

After this, Mr. Stuart makes his entrance, played by Laurence Thornton. He plays a very meek and mild-mannered civil servant, and this was taken off superbly. Then, when a turn of events leads him to assume the part of an exiled King of England, where he had to be an overbearing, pompous ruler, he came through beautifully. His power was felt throughout the audience, and I am thrilled at the versatility displayed by Mr. Thornton, and am looking forward to seeing him perform again in the near future.

Bob Knight and Marcia Caple, who played the parts of Drs. Shrubsole ane Sobieska respectively were both excellent in their parts, and Mrs. Caples' charm was definately felt. Mr. Knight was realistic in his portrayal of one of the Kings' servants, and again presented a bright point in the future of the Kanata Little Theatre.

The cast was rounded out by Liane Freedman and Craig Moore. Mrs. Freedman has to assume the role of an old quack of a lady, who has remedies for everything, and whose philosophy of life is that she has "positive powers" and that her ability to love everybody overcomes their hate for her. She maintained her part in splendid fashion.

Craig Moore, once again gave me good cause to look forward to the future. His convincing style as a psychologically-oriented teenager who analyses everybody was fantastic, which applies for everyone in the cast.

On the whole, the play was one of the funniest I have seen in a long time, and was on a parallel with "My Three Angels", as it was just that funny. The constant stabs at the civil service were delightful, and only one of the many good points of the production.

Hilarious, superbly directed by Dewi Williams, and acting par excellence made the show a total success, and this writer can't wait for the next performance from the Kanata Theatre Group.

'Hunting Stuart' proved popular

by Dan Paige

Imagine the stereotype of an Ottawa civil servant, transformed for an evening into Bonnie Prince Charlie, and you have the gist of "Hunting Stuart", last weekend's Kanata Theatre Group production. The audience laughed through it all, in spite of being sprayed upon, hammered by light philosophy and, for some, satirized. The playwrite, Robertson Davies took the theme of social distinction — deserved or innate. Forget the theme and the play was a good comedy.

As the complacent, mild-mannered civil servant, Laurence Thornton stole the show. His extremely difficult role, the portrayal of two contrasting personalities, was exceptionally delightful.

Bob Night, playing the psychologist who created the "monster" showed great comedic talent. By good timing and subtle, controlled mannerisms, he got full wo th from his lines.

The one, truly eccentric character, "Clemmie" was captivating from the start, thanks to the craftsmanship of Liane Freedman.

Heather Walt, gained no sympathy as the irritated housewife trapped by her husband's social status. She satisfied all perconcieved notions of the role by a fluster of gestures and facial expressions. Good work!

Other members of the cast, Andrea Boyd, Craig Moore and Marcia Caple, were equally convincing in supporting roles that wellreflected each crucial moment of the play. The stage was constantly a panorama of reactions, thanks to fine acting and the directing of Dewi Williams.

Special credit should go to all members of the crew. A functional set, with blatantly sarchastic props, suitable costumes and hairstyles and other details showed that much thought had gone into the production.



CAST OF "HUNTING STUART". The talented cast of Kanata Theatre's "Hunting Stuart" (left to right), Bob Knight, Marcia Caple, Andrea Boyd, Laurence Thornton, Craig Moore (unfortunately hidden here, but a real standout in a difficult monologue), Heather Walt and Lianne Freedman.

Kanata Theatre

Journal Review
By ROBIN DORRELL

The third production in this, the Kanata Theatre Group's fifth season, is Hunting Stuart by Canadian playwright Robertson Davies. It can be seen tonight and tomorrow in the Earl of March High School.

Davies is one of our more prolific writers. Hunting Stuart is amusing but frivolous and lacks the dramatic punch found in some of his other plays. At My Heart's Core and A Masque of Aesop, for example.

However, Hunting Stuart is a deft satire and this version of it, directed by Dewi Williams, has many delightful moments. Its only major fault is that it drags at times, in fact comes to a dead stop now and then.

It's a preposterous situation and serves merely as a vehicle for Davies' jibes at our collective lack of wisdom.

The Kanata Theatre Group has been struggling with the awkward shape and peculiar acoustics of the Earl of March High School and this time they have almost won the battle. The set for Hunting Stuart, designed by Ron Maslin and Phil Gregory, forces the action to the front of the stage. This brings everything closer to the audience and gives a pleasant feeling of intimacy, a vital theatrical factor.

The players all perform well, especially Laurence Thornton as the humble little guy with a tigerish alter ego. Heather Walt is effective as his horrified wife and Liane Freedman makes the most of her role as a nutty distant relative.

Choice of public-service comedy pays off

By Betty Swimmings
Assistant music and drama editor

Kanata Theatre Group made a good choice when it picked Robertson Davies's comedy Hunting Stuart.

What could be better than a play about the public service in a public-service town? And who could appreciate the playwright's witty satirical jabs more than an audience composed of a number of public servants? It was a safe gamble and it paid off.

Thursday's opening-night audience responded in high good humor to the clever lines and sly jabs at the peculiarities of the public service.

And the sciences too came in for their share of the Davies needle when two strangers with "scientific" concerns disrupt the peaceful homelife of the self-effacing Ben Stuart.

Ben, played by Laurence Thornton, is a timid, middle-aged man dominated by his strait-laced, social-climbing wife. And in Mr. Thornton's skilful hands, the repressed Ben develops into a warmly human man, tender-hearted and gentle.

So real is this picture of Ben that his metamorphosis into the arrogant, womanizing Chevalier is a shock, but at the same time completely believable. It's a very fine performance.

As Ben's wife Lilian, Heather Walt establishes her character's prim, puritanical leanings from the first, tight-lipped scene.

Lilian disapproves of many things and Miss Walt shows it in the line of her body, the set of her head, the clenched hands and compressed lips. She's long suffering and vocal in her presentation of her sufferings. The whole character is skilfully drawn and carefully maintained right to the end. Most interesting.

One of the crosses Lilian has to bear is Aunt Clemmie, played with broad humor by Liane Freedman, who manages to make the cunning, old charlatan loveable and amusing.

But Hunting Stuart is not without flaws. The lighting man had his problems with his cues; there were a number of memory lapses, sometimes at the expense of a good line; and the first act was slow—almost leaden. But from the beginning of the second act things picked up and continued at a steady pace.

But the pluses outweigh the faults. Dewi Williams has chosen a lively cast to do his bidding; Ron Maslin and Phil Gregory have designed a lived-in looking set with all the clutter and bric-a-brac of a real family; and someone has had the happy idea of adding a piper to play Scottish music before and between acts.

Hunting Stuart offers an entertaining evening and continues tonight and Saturday at 8:30 p.m. at the Earl of March High School.

Kanata Standard March 4/74



"Hunting Stuart" – splendid entertainment

It would have been difficult to guess what the Kanata Theatre Group might choose as a sequel to their most ambitious production to date, "The Importance of Being Earnest". Director Dewi Williams is to be firmly commended in his selection of Robertson Davies' "Hunting Stuart" to follow Oscar Wilde's satire on Victorian values. A minor Canadian civil servant discovers his ancestral memories of Bonnie Prince Charles. It is unlikely that a more fitting location than Kanata could be found for probing the foibles of both the civil service and Scotsmen. From the roars of the audience there must have been an ample presence of both. Scotsmen and others could appreciate the effective touch of using a piper to set the character of the evening as well as lead the audience back to the auditorium at the appropriate times.

Robertson Davies is master of Massey College, University of Toronto, former editor of the Peterboro Examiner and a well known Canadian writer. "Hunting Stuart" was written in 1955 for the Crest Theatre Comapny of Toronto and, according to available knowledge, has not been since performed until this production by the KTG.

That is unfortunate. Seldom does an actor have the opportunity to display such a change in character as when the mild civil servant, Henry Benedict Stuart, becomes the embodiment of his bawdy ancestor, Prince Charles. Laurence Thornton as the Stuart is familiar to the Kanata audiences in strong, even harsh roles. The superb voice modulation and deferential demeanor in his portrayal of a dead end civil servant provides such an image contrast that one is compelled to admire Mr Thornton's abilities.

Henry Stuart's reprobate aunt, Mrs Clementine Izzard, proclaims herself as "a swell old goddess," dispensing such drops of wisdom as "principles and cold feet are the same thing most of the time." Liane Freedman plays this middle European Dirty Sally with such excellence that seeing is the only adequate description.

Heather Walt's Lillian Stuart, the club bound wife, began slowly, but quickly emerged as a thoroughly satisfactory performance. Marcia Caple brought a dancer's presence to the stage in her movements and gestures, especially at the end of the second act. Bob Knight, Andrea Boyd and Craig Moore successfully filled the other supporting roles.

Seven people on stage almost continually does present a disturbing challenge to the director. The matters of entrances and movements may have been helped by a more straightforward set. One wonders if a satire on the decorating tastes of civil servants was intended.

After moving through the critical first act at a praise-worthy pace, the cast did a smashingly good job of the drinking scene. Although the final act was somewhat inconclusive, "Hunting Stuart" was splendid entertainment.

RD















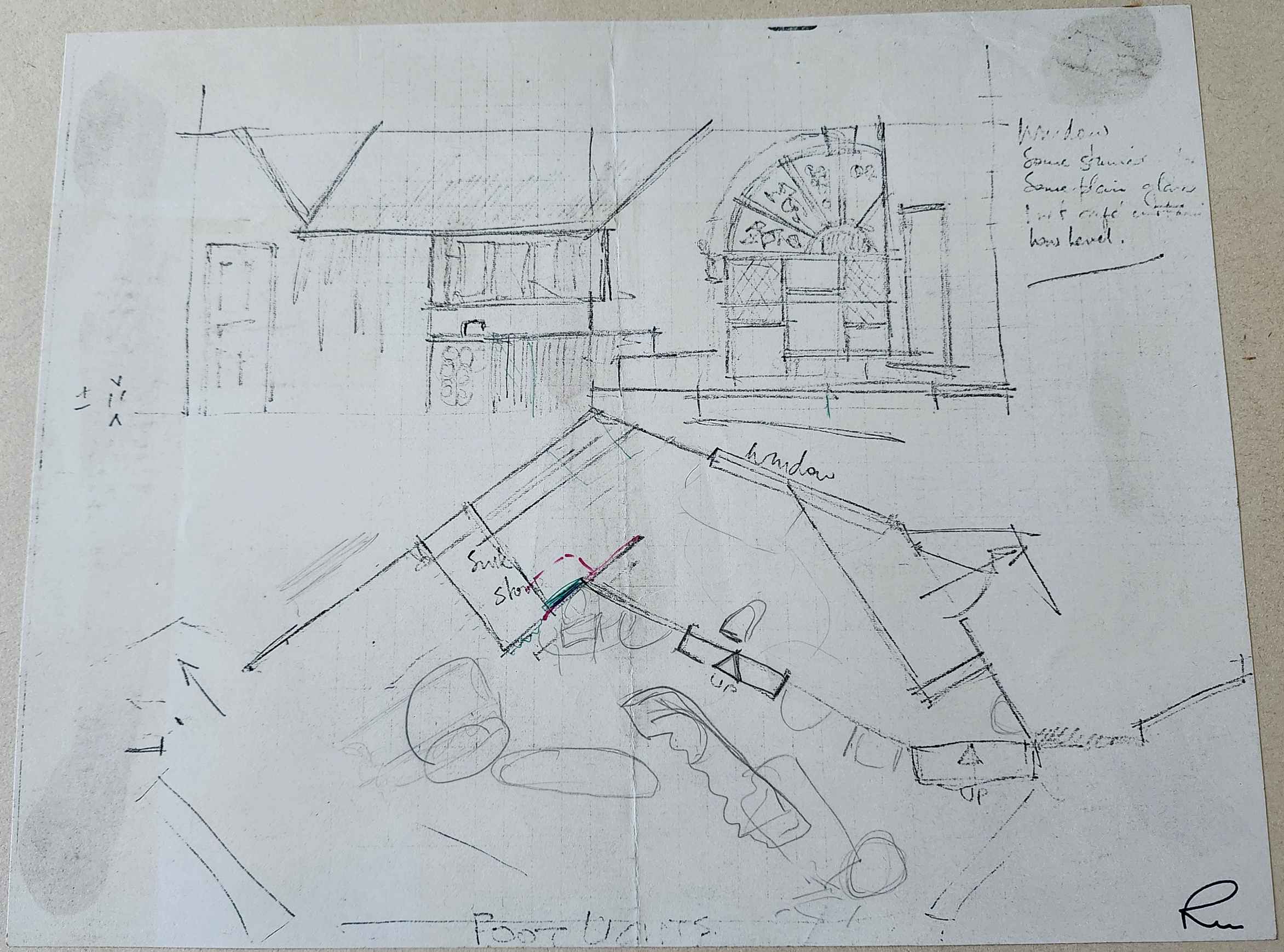
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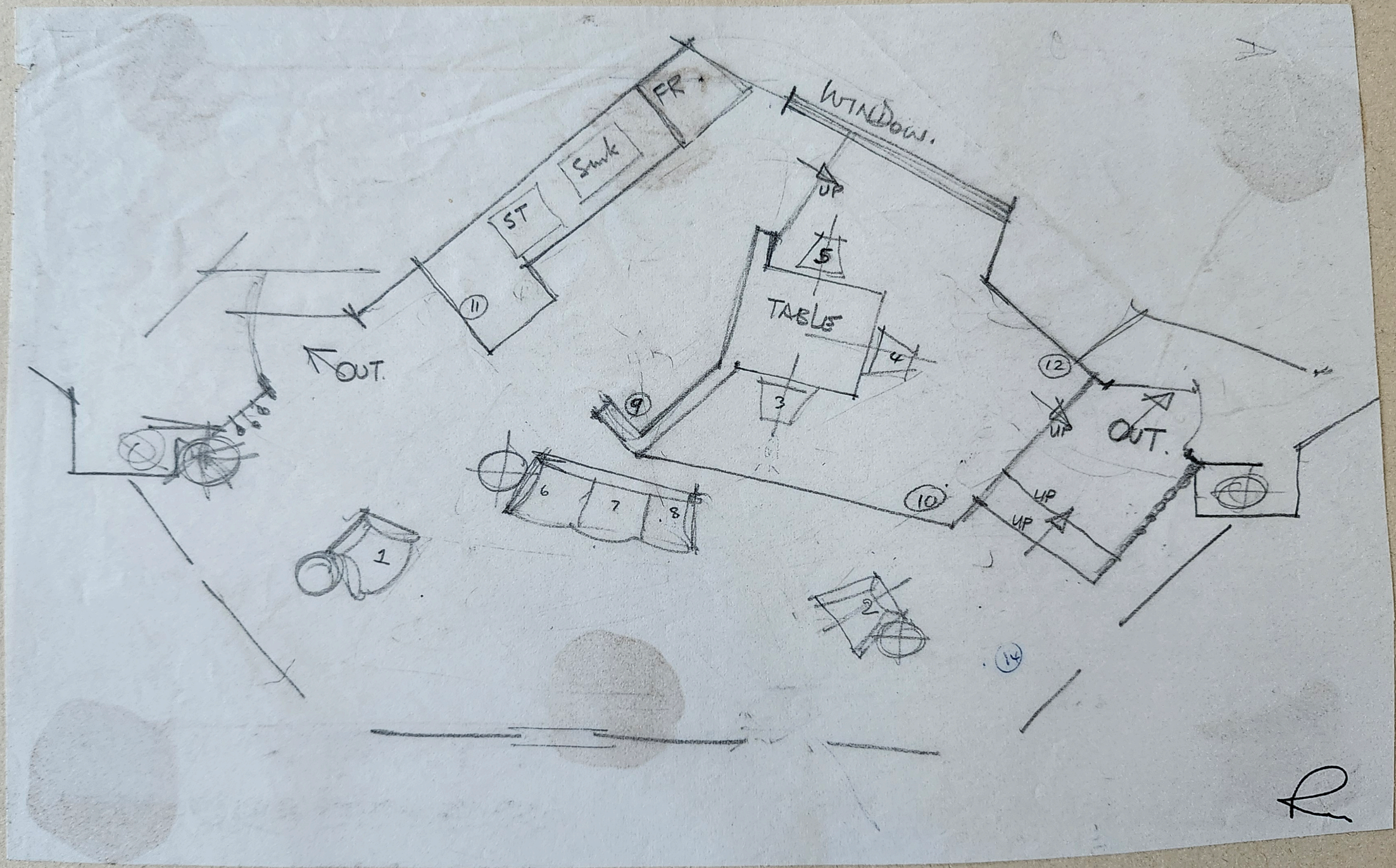
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