A KIND OF ALASKA

Written by Harold Pinter
Directed by Celeste Finn

Featuring: Kate Schrock as Deborah
           Thomas Fox as Dr. Hornby
           Celeste Finn as Pauline

Stage Manager: Melissa Feldman
Set Design and Construction: The Cast
Painter: Robyn Okrant
Last Minute Help: Chad Lembree
Costume Designer: Liz Tinder

The Director Wishes to Thank:

1. Dr. Gladden Schrock, the theater fixer
2. Bingham House
3. Dr. Oliver Sack's nice assistant in New York
4. Anyone who remotely supported this crazy end-of-term project
5. My wonderful and patient self-motivated cast
A Kind of Alaska was inspired by Awakenings by Oliver Sacks M.D., first published in 1973 by Gerald Duckworth and Co.

In the winter of 1916–17, there spread over Europe, and subsequently over the rest of the world, an extraordinary epidemic illness which presented itself in innumerable forms—as delirium, mania, trances, coma, sleep, insomnia, restlessness, and states of Parkinsonism. It was eventually identified by the great physician Constantin von Economo and named by him encephalitis lethargica, or sleeping sickness.

Over the next ten years almost five million people fell victim to the disease of whom more than a third died. Of the survivors some escaped almost unscathed, but the majority moved into states of deepening illness. The worst-affected sank into singular states of ‘sleep’—conscious of their surroundings but motionless, speechless, and without hope or will, confined to asylums or other institutions.

Fifty years later, with the development of the remarkable drug L-DOPA, they erupted into life once more.