

PAUL DELANEY

## Chronology

- 1937 Stoppard born Tomáš Straüssler (3 July), the second son of Eugen and Martha Straüssler in Zlín, Czechoslovakia, where his father was a physician for Bata, a shoe manufacturer.
- 1939 The day the Nazis invade Czechoslovakia (14 March), the Straüsslers leave Zlín, with other Jewish doctors who worked for Bata, to go to Singapore.
- 1942 Briefly attends an English convent school in Singapore. When women and children are evacuated prior to the Japanese invasion, four-year-old Tomáš along with his mother and brother leaves for India; his father remains behind and is killed.
- 1943–46 Attends an English-speaking boarding school run by American Methodists in Darjeeling; his mother serves as manager of the local Bata shoe shop.
- 1945 Mother marries Kenneth Stoppard, a British Army major (November).
- 1946 Family moves to England (February) and three weeks later Major Stoppard adopts his two stepsons, giving them his surname; Tommy Straüssler becomes Tom Stoppard.
- 1946–51 Attends the Dolphin School, Nottinghamshire.
- 1951–54 Attends the Pocklington School, Yorkshire.
- 1950 Stoppard family moves to Bristol.
- 1954–58 Stoppard becomes a journalist on the *Western Daily Press*. Kenneth Tynan serves as drama critic on the *Observer*.
- 1954–60 Stoppard attends productions at the Bristol Old Vic.
- 1955 First British production, directed by Peter Hall, of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, which Stoppard cites as the catalyst for modern British drama.
- 1956 The Royal Court production of John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* acclaimed by critic Kenneth Tynan. The Berliner Ensemble, directed by Bertolt Brecht, visits London.

## Chronology

- 1958–60 Stoppard works as a journalist on the *Bristol Evening World*.
- 1958 The 24-year-old Peter O’Toole’s performance as Hamlet at the Bristol Old Vic impresses Stoppard.
- 1959 Peter Hall founds the Royal Shakespeare Company.
- 1960 On holiday for his 23rd birthday, Stoppard decides to quit his job as a journalist to try his hand as a playwright; writes *A Walk on the Water*.
- 1960–61 Writes *The Gamblers* (a one-act play) and *The Stand-Ins* (later revised as *The Real Inspector Hound*).
- 1962–63 Theatre critic at *Scene* magazine in London.
- 1963 *A Walk on the Water* televised.  
 Writes *I Can’t Give You Anything But Love, Baby* and *Funny Man* (unproduced television plays).  
 Becomes romantically involved with Jose Ingle.
- 1964 *The Dissolution of Dominic Boot* and “*M*” is for *Moon Among Other Things* on radio.  
 Three short stories published.  
 Writes *This Way Out With Samuel Boot* (unproduced television play).  
 In Berlin on a Ford Foundation grant, writes *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Meet King Lear*, a one-act play.  
*A Walk on the Water* staged in Hamburg, Germany.
- 1965 Marries Jose Ingle (26 March).  
*The Gamblers*, first produced stage play, performed at Bristol University in a two-act version.  
*A Paragraph for Mr. Blake* (an adaptation of Stoppard’s short story “The Story”) televised.  
 Writes *How Sir Dudley Lost the Empire* (unproduced television play).  
 Writes the first of seventy episodes of “A Student’s Diary,” a radio serial about an Arab medical student in London broadcast by the BBC World Service in Arabic.
- 1966 *If You’re Glad I’ll Be Frank* on radio.  
 Stoppard’s first son, Oliver, born on 4 May.  
 Translation (with Nicholas Bethell) of Slawomir Mrozek’s *Tango* staged by the RSC.  
*A Separate Peace* televised.  
*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* staged on the Edinburgh Festival Fringe; Ronald Bryden’s review in the *Observer* prompts Kenneth Tynan, literary manager at the National Theatre, to cable Stoppard requesting a script.

## Chronology

- 1967 *Lord Malquist and Mr Moon*, a novel, published.  
*Teeth* televised.  
*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* staged by the National Theatre, making Stoppard the youngest playwright to have a play performed by the NT.  
*Another Moon Called Earth* televised; *Albert's Bridge* on radio.  
*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* opens on Broadway, the first National Theatre production to transfer to New York.
- 1968 *Enter a Free Man* (a revised version of *A Walk on the Water*) staged.  
*Rosencrantz* wins the Tony award for best play.  
*The Real Inspector Hound* staged.  
*Neutral Ground* televised.
- 1969 First stage productions of *Albert's Bridge* and *If You're Glad I'll Be Frank* at the Edinburgh Festival.  
 Stoppard's second son, Barnaby, born 20 September.  
 Exhibition at the Tate Gallery of the works of René Magritte, who died in 1967.  
 Stoppard leaves Jose and takes their two sons.
- 1970 *Where Are They Now?* on radio.  
 Stoppard begins divorce and custody proceedings.  
 Expands *The Dissolution of Dominic Boot* into *The Engagement* (televised in the US and shown in cinemas in the UK).  
*After Magritte* staged.  
 Stoppard, with his two sons, moves in with Dr. Miriam Moore-Robinson.
- 1971 *Dogg's Our Pet* staged.
- 1972 Divorce from Jose Stoppard, *née* Ingle, granted and Stoppard wins custody of his two sons.  
*Jumpers*, staged by the National Theatre, begins Stoppard's long-term theatrical partnership with director Peter Wood.  
 Marries Dr. Miriam Moore-Robinson (11 February); their first child, William, is born 7 March.  
 First New York production of *The Real Inspector Hound* and *After Magritte*.  
*One Pair of Eyes* televises an episode entitled "Tom Stoppard Doesn't Know."  
*Artist Descending a Staircase* on radio.
- 1973 Adaptation of Federico Garcia Lorca's *The House of Bernarda Alba* staged.

## Chronology

- Stoppard directs Lynn Redgrave in Garson Kanin's *Born Yesterday*.
- 1974 First New York production of *Jumpers*.  
*Travesties* staged by the RSC.  
 Stoppard's fourth son, Edmund, born 16 September.  
 First New York production of *Enter a Free Man*.
- 1975 *The Boundary*, cowritten with Clive Exton, televised.  
 First New York production of *Travesties*.  
 Coauthors screenplay of Thomas Wiseman's *The Romantic Englishwoman*.  
 Adaptation of Jerome K. Jerome's *Three Men in a Boat* televised.
- 1976 *Dirty Linen* staged and becomes the first lunchtime play to transfer to the West End.  
*Travesties* wins two Tony Awards including best play.  
 Stoppard meets Victor Fainberg, confined for five years in a Soviet psychiatric hospital for protesting the invasion of Czechoslovakia, whose experiences contribute to *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*.  
 Speaks out on behalf of Soviet dissidents.  
*Jumpers* returns to the repertoire as the National Theatre opens its new facility on the South Bank.  
*The (15 Minute) Dogg's Troupe Hamlet* performed outside the NT.  
 Vladimir Bukovsky, referred to in *Every Good Boy* as "my friend C," is released from Soviet prison and sent to the West.
- 1977 First New York production of *Dirty Linen*.  
 Czech dissidents publish Charter 77; Czech playwright Václav Havel and other signers are arrested and charged with subversion. Stoppard publishes letters to the editor about Havel's arrest.  
 Meets with Soviet dissidents in Moscow and Leningrad.  
*Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* receives one performance with the London Symphony Orchestra.  
 Visits Czechoslovakia and publishes an account of the repression of the Chartists.  
 The National Union of Journalists' call for newspapers to be closed shops prompts Stoppard to publish a letter to the editor denouncing the suppression of freedom of expression.  
*Professional Foul* televised.

## Chronology

- In the Prague trial of the Chartists, Havel is given a suspended sentence but other Czech dissidents receive prison terms.
- 1978 *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* revived with a chamber orchestra in London and given its first US production.  
 Dissidents Anatoly Shcharansky and Alexander Ginzburg put on trial by Soviet authorities; Stoppard protests at the treatment of Soviet Jews.  
*Night and Day* staged.  
 Adapts Vladimir Nabokov's *Despair* for film.
- 1979 Stoppard serves as chairman of the worldwide "Let Misha Go" campaign, resulting in Soviet authorities releasing the thirteen-year-old boy to join his mother in England.  
*Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth* tours England and the US.  
*Undiscovered Country*, an adaptation of Arthur Schnitzler's *Das Weite Land*, staged at the National Theatre.  
 First New York production of *Every Good Boy Deserves Favor*.  
 Havel and five other dissidents sentenced to prison terms.  
 First New York production of *Night and Day*.
- 1980 Stoppard participates in a staged recreation in Munich of Havel's 1979 trial.  
 In preparation for the 22nd Olympiad, Soviet authorities launch the heaviest crackdown on dissenters in fifteen years; Stoppard supports the Olympic boycott movement.  
 Writes screenplay of *The Human Factor*, adapted from the novel by Graham Greene.
- 1981 *On the Razzle* (adapted from Johann Nestroy's *Einen Jux will er sich machen*) staged in a National Theatre production that includes Felicity Kendal cast as a boy.  
 Publishes an "Open Letter to President Husák" about being denied a visa to return to Czechoslovakia.  
 In Poland, martial law imposed as General Jaruzelski's regime outlaws the trade union Solidarity and arrests its leaders including Lech Walesa.
- 1982 Stoppard begins to write a television play, which will become *Squaring the Circle*, about Solidarity.  
*Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* revival with the London Symphony Orchestra.  
*The Real Thing*, starring Felicity Kendal and Roger Rees, staged.  
*On the Razzle* receives US premiere.  
*The Dog It Was That Died* on radio.

## Chronology

- 1983 *The Love for Three Oranges* (translation of libretto for Prokofiev's opera) performed.  
 Havel is released from prison.  
 The Nobel Peace Prize is awarded to Lech Walesa.
- 1984 First New York production of *The Real Thing* wins five Tony awards including best play and runs until May 1985.  
*Squaring the Circle* televised.  
*Rough Crossing* (freely adapted from Ferenc Molnár's *Play at the Castle*) staged at the National Theatre.
- 1985 Receives Oscar nomination for cowriting the screenplay of *Brazil*.  
 Revises *Jumpers* for West End revival with Felicity Kendal.  
 Directs *The Real Inspector Hound* at the National Theatre.
- 1986 Organizes "Roll Call at the NT," a 24-hour reading outside the National Theatre by various notables (Senator Bill Bradley flew over for the event) of the names of 10,000 Russian Jews denied the freedom to emigrate.  
*Dalliance* (adapted from Schnitzler's *Liebelei*) staged.  
 Translates *Largo Desolato* by Havel for the Bristol Old Vic.
- 1987 First London and US productions of Stoppard's translation of *Largo Desolato*.  
 Writes screenplay for *Empire of the Sun* (dir. Steven Spielberg), adapted from J. G. Ballard's novel.
- 1988 *Hapgood* staged after a six-month wait for Felicity Kendal to return to the stage following the birth of her child.  
 While retaining their country home in Iver, Stoppard purchases a Chelsea Harbour luxury apartment separate from his wife's in-town flat.  
 First stage production of the radio play *Artist Descending a Staircase*.  
 Writes screenplay (unproduced) of Laurens van der Post's novel *A Far Off Place*.
- 1989 Writes television version of *The Dog It Was That Died*.  
 Filming of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* is canceled when Sean Connery withdraws from the cast.  
 Stoppard revises *Hapgood* for first US production in Los Angeles.  
 First New York production of *Artist Descending a Staircase*.  
 Makes uncredited contributions to the screenplays of *Always* and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.  
 Appointed to the Board of the National Theatre.

## Chronology

- Václav Havel is elected interim president of Czechoslovakia and subsequently reelected to the presidency in 1990.
- 1990 First New York production of *Rough Crossing*.  
*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, written and directed by Stoppard, wins the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival. Stoppard and actress Felicity Kendal are linked romantically in a relationship that will last eight years; Stoppard and his wife agree to a legal separation.  
 Writes screenplay for *The Russia House* (starring Sean Connery), adapted from the novel by John le Carré.
- 1991 Lech Walesa becomes president of Poland.  
 Film version of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* released.  
*In the Native State* on radio.  
 Visits Darjeeling for the first time since leaving India forty-five years earlier.  
 Writes screenplay for *Billy Bathgate*, adapted from the E. L. Doctorow novel.
- 1992 Divorces Miriam Stoppard.  
*The Real Inspector Hound* and *The 15-Minute Hamlet* revived on Broadway.  
 With Marc Norman writes screenplay for *Shakespeare in Love* but filming is canceled in October when Julia Roberts withdraws from the cast.
- 1993 *A Separate Peace* televised.  
*Arcadia* staged at the National Theatre.  
 Writes new narration for Franz Lehár's *The Merry Widow*.  
*Travesties* revived by the RSC, making Stoppard the first living playwright to have plays running concurrently in London at the NT and the RSC.  
 Stoppard's archives deposited at the University of Texas at Austin.  
*Arcadia* on radio with the original NT cast.  
 Writes screenplay (unproduced) for *Hopeful Monsters*, a novel by Nicholas Mosley.
- 1994 Learns from a Czech relative that his family had been Jewish and that he had three aunts who, along with his grandparents, died in the Holocaust  
 West End transfers for the RSC revival of *Travesties* and the NT production of *Arcadia*.  
 First New York production of *Hapgood*.

## Chronology

- Adapts *Three Men in a Boat* for radio.
- Writes screenplay (unproduced) for a full-length animated film version of *Cats*, the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical.
- 1995 *Indian Ink* (stage adaptation of the radio play *In the Native State*) opens in London starring Felicity Kendal.
- When *Arcadia* opens in New York while *Hapgood* is still running, Stoppard becomes the first playwright to have plays concurrently on both stages at Lincoln Center. *Arcadia* nominated for a Tony Award for best play.
- Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* revived at the National Theatre.
- Begins adapting *Hapgood* for the screen, having given the film rights to Stockard Channing who played the title role in New York.
- 1996 Stoppard's mother dies, age 85, in October; a few days later Stoppard's stepfather writes to his 59-year-old stepson and asks the playwright to stop using "Stoppard" as his name.
- 1997 Stoppard's version of Chekhov's *The Seagull* directed by Sir Peter Hall.
- Stoppard's stepfather dies.
- The Invention of Love* staged at the National Theatre.
- Knighted at Buckingham Palace, Sir Tom Stoppard becomes the first dramatist thus honored since Sir Terence Rattigan in 1971.
- 1998 *The Real Inspector Hound* revived in London.
- Returns, with his brother Peter, to Zlín for the first time since his family fled Czechoslovakia 59 years earlier.
- Adaptation of *Poodle Springs* by Raymond Chandler televised.
- Felicity Kendal ends eight-year romantic relationship with Stoppard.
- The Invention of Love* transfers to the West End.
- Stoppard becomes the first living non-Francophone playwright to have a play (*Arcadia*) staged at the Comédie-Française.
- Revises screenplay of *Shakespeare in Love* for a film starring Gwyneth Paltrow and Joseph Fiennes.
- Spends a month trying to find a way to adapt *Arcadia* as a film.
- 1999 *Shakespeare in Love* wins three Golden Globes including best screenplay and seven Academy Awards including best screenplay and best picture.
- Donmar Warehouse revives *The Real Thing* in an award-winning production with Stephen Dillane and Jennifer Ehle.
- Makes uncredited contributions to the screenplay for *Sleepy*

## Chronology

- Hollow* (dir. Tim Burton), adapted from the short story by Washington Irving.
- Writes screenplays for *Vatel*, a French film to star Gérard Depardieu; and for *Enigma*, to be produced by Mick Jagger adapted from the novel by Robert Harris.
- Reports that he is at work on a play dealing with the role of the artist in nineteenth-century Russia.
- 2000 First US production of *The Invention of Love* in San Francisco. Begins calling the six-hour play he is writing on nineteenth-century Russia, a trilogy.
- Tweaks his translation of *The Seagull* for its first US production in San Diego.
- Begins romantic relationship with former model Marie Helvin.
- The Donmar Warehouse production of *The Real Thing* transfers to New York and wins Tony Awards for best revival, best actor and best actress.
- Vatel*, with screenplay co-written by Stoppard, released.
- Enigma* (dir. Michael Apted), with screenplay by Stoppard, filmed.
- 2001 First New York production of *The Invention of Love*.
- Stoppard's trilogy set in nineteenth-century Russia to be staged at the National Theatre.

Cambridge University Press  
0521645921 - The Cambridge Companion to Tom Stoppard  
Edited by Katherine E. Kelly  
Excerpt  
[More information](#)

---

KATHERINE E. KELLY

## Introduction: Tom Stoppard in transformation

This book takes a new look at Tom Stoppard's drama, fiction, and screen-writing nearly forty years after his work began appearing before audiences. Most contributors agree that the Stoppard style in 2000 is recognizable but fundamentally changed from his self-conscious dandyism of the 1960s and early 1970s. As Stoppard has continued to write, his later work has not only extended his early preoccupation with memory, uncertainty, and ethics but also deepened the sense of human consequence growing from ethical conflict and intellectual doubt. In the past ten years, as many of the book's chapters suggest, Stoppard has overcome the charge of emotional coldness, especially the claim that he had failed to represent human love. In slowly dropping his emotional guard, he has imbued his writing with a depth of compassion hinted at in the early work through his consistent appeals to humor.

These chapters are written to introduce both first-time and experienced readers of Stoppard's novel and plays to the critical tradition that has grown up alongside them from the late 1960s to the present. Most offer the added value of viewing the earlier work through the lens of the later, suggesting both a continuous shifting of Stoppard's technique and dramatic architecture and a continuity of theme over four decades of writing. In showing us, for example, how a 1967 play like *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (*R&GAD*) both prepares for and inhabits the 1998 screenplay *Shakespeare in Love*, the chapters encourage us to read Stoppard's writing as a series of transformational exchanges between texts quoted in the plays, between the history and fiction represented by the plays, and between the writing early and later in his career. This exchange, initiated by the author but completed by "knowing" readers and spectators, is the secret to the pleasure of Stoppard's plays. It is the hope of this collection to intensify that pleasure for all who use it.

Stoppard's habit of recycling prior texts, which informs virtually all of his work, draws the reader and spectator into the process of transformation by presenting them with familiar literary language (and visual imagery) made