



Comic misunderstandings

The director of the Melbourne French Theatre's next production doesn't speak French, but that doesn't stop him, writes Rosemary Bolger

There's no reason those who don't speak French won't enjoy Melbourne French Theatre's next production, *Run For Your Wife* – just ask director Stig Wemyss. He can't speak the language, either.

He had to be talked into taking the position, but Wemyss believes not understanding the language helped him focus more on the actors' performances.

"I could tell by just the way they were delivering the lines if it was right."

Performed in French with English subtitles, the play is a classic farce about Jean Martin, whose irregular working schedule as a taxi driver has enabled him to lead a double life complete with two wives.

When he is injured and taken to hospital, his carefully separated lives and families begin to collide.

As well as picking up some French words, Wemyss says he

has developed an appreciation of the culture.

"At rehearsals you spend the first 10 minutes just greeting everybody, kissing everyone," he jokes.

The founder of the Melbourne French Theatre, Michael Bula, who is also the producer of the play, says *Run For Your Wife* was an unusual choice for the theatre company because it was originally an English play written by Ray Cooney in 1982.

It was adapted by the French Theatre Company last year, which modernised the script, changed the setting to Paris and added distinct French humour.

Run For Your Wife (Stationnement Alterne) will run from May 6 to 10 at the Collingwood College Theatre, corner of Cromwell Street and McCutcheon Way. For bookings, visit www.mftinc.org or call 9349 2250.