



CURTAIN UP

the newsletter for

noda London

Be inspired by amateur theatre

What's in this issue

From the councillor

District Round Up

NODA Programme and Poster Competition

Whats's On In London



Summer 2023 issue



Welcome to the Summer issue of Curtain Up! – I am delighted to have received more articles this time, especially around the Edinburgh Fringe (some still awaiting) that will interest our members. I also have the promise of more for the next issue. However, I'm not complacent and am still hoping that the many celebrations and events will be shared with the NODA London family. If it's only 250 words plus a credited photo it makes all the difference to how we communicate with each other, I look forward to hearing from you.

Jacquie Stedman – Editor

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Councillor's Update



It certainly has been a busy time this year with so many excellent productions taking place. A number of societies have been recognising their significant anniversaries and it is a delight to see such longevity in the excellent groups that abound in our London Region.

Our Celebration Day and AGM took place in June and was very well attended. We had first class musical and dramatic entertainment as well as a comprehensive demonstration of the art of sign language interpretation.

The most popular NODA Summer School took place in August much to the pleasure of all who attended, and plans are well underway for Summer School 2024. Make a note in your diary

now that the professional training courses go on sale on 1 December and sells out *fast!* Also London Region has Bursaries available as well to help out.

What a pleasure it is to see so many varied and interesting shows planned for our Autumn season – well done London Region and I look forward to joining you.

Pam Armstrong, Regional Councillor, NODA London

Be inspired by amateur theatre

NODA LONDON REGION – DISTRICT 3

Passionate about Theatre – want to get more involved?

District 3 in the London Region is looking for a new Regional Representative to help support the vibrant societies within the area.

The role of the Regional Representative is to support the groups when necessary and keep them abreast of happenings in the world of amateur theatre. The Representative is also required to attend productions, when invited, and write a report acting as a critical friend.

We all want to improve our theatrical skills and as a Regional Rep you are in a unique position to encourage members to do just that.

If you enjoy, and have a good knowledge of theatre, we would really love to hear from you with a view to joining our team.

If you are interested please contact your Regional Councillor below

pam.armstrong@noda.org.uk

I would love to hear from you

District Round-up – News from around the Region

London District 1 – Matt Bentley

It's a sad fact that summer is now drawing to a close. Despite it possibly not being the summer we had dreamed of, those of us locked away in theatres for so much of it were at least spared the sweltering oppression that can come with multiple consecutive heatwaves. Instead, I was delighted to spend many very pleasant hours in theatres that weren't overheated, seeing some truly excellent work.

One thing that has been increasingly apparent over the past six months is that costs are going up. This means that rehearsal periods are being shortened, long-used theatres are unavailable or untenable, and societies are having to become ever more resourceful. But creativity thrives in the face of restrictions and, I am pleased to report, the quality of the theatre I have seen has not suffered as a consequence.

Societies are having find ways of cutting costs without sacrificing quality, some more successfully than others. There are those societies who continue to adhere to processes and budgets that have worked for them for years, but with instructions to producers to cut costs wherever possible as they go. This relies on luck and, while it may come through in some cases, the majority of the time the audience is left feeling the show as a whole has dipped in quality compared with previous years.

An alternative method is to look at the specifics of a particular show and decide what it absolutely needs to succeed. If it's a set-heavy show, maybe there is a way to simplify the costumes. If costumes are important for a play, maybe a few rehearsals can be cut to fund them, or perhaps some rehearsals can be held outside in the summer, or lines runs can take place in a quiet pub. Significant dance shows need significant rehearsal time, so maybe that can be funded through a less detailed set or a simplified lighting plot. We would all love to have the best of everything for our shows, but every script is different and if the focus needs to be on certain production elements, those shouldn't be sacrificed where cuts can be made elsewhere. And for goodness sake please don't skimp on the sound budget if you're doing a musical!

Fortunately, though, the most important elements of any show are free. The talent of the cast and crew is something that (in most cases) can't be bought, and that is always the true standout of so many shows I get to see in this role. Societies in District 1 really are attracting some outstanding talent as well as nurturing those of their regulars. I am also always buoyed to see society regulars listed in the programme in production roles - names I recognise from performing roles stepping backstage to support their team. I'm a firm believer that an actor or creative team member should get as much experience as they can in production roles, and this true community approach allows for sustainable, well-rounded societies to thrive.

So instead of listing the shows I've seen in the last few months, I want to take this opportunity to thank every society whose shows I have attended, and congratulate them on keeping it all going during this difficult time. Your hard work is absolutely apparent and I recognise the thought and creativity that goes into every show. There has been some astounding theatre in the District recently, and I can see plenty more on the schedule. I can't wait to see it!

On a final note, panto season is approaching. As you put together your festive works, I'll sit here dreaming of pantos that are two hours or less, including the interval. Let's make that dream a reality.

London District 2 – Mike Smith

That wealth of talent I referred to in my last News Round Up has continued to delight audiences with performances of a complete mix of plays and musicals.

GLOC presented the ever popular “Addams Family” at the Questors Theatre in Ealing. This was yet another stunning performance from this very vibrant group.

Beaufort Players forged ahead with two very different productions. Limehouse, harking back to 1981, when four prominent politicians gathered to plot a political revolution. Potted Shakespeare, featuring Othello and Two Gentlemen of Verona. Two short plays, both reimagined versions of the originals. It gave me great pleasure in being able to present three Regional Awards and the prestigious Flame Award to this group during my visit.

May I add congratulations to all those who were presented awards at the London Region AGM in Radlett.

NODA Summer School provided me with my yearly “Fix”. Spending a week immersed in music, drama, technical and all things theatrical with like-minded folk. I commend it to all members of every Society.

A warm welcome to two new Societies to District 2. Teatre Syrena, The Polish Children’s and Youth Theatre and Krik. I look forward to future visits to you both.

Covering Societies outside my region has been a delight. With our Rep from District 3 standing down, it has given some of us the opportunity of visiting different groups – re-enforcing the fact that the London Region is well and truly alive and kicking. Metamorphoses – performed at the Studio, Wimbledon Theatre, by the Carlton Theatre Group, was ambitious to say the least. Based around a very large water bath – and I mean very large!!

I look forward to my up-and-coming visits which include Godspell and Calendar Girls. Hillingdon Musical Society performing Sister Act in a local Baptist church I’m sure will be great fun.

Representing the London Region, several members attended the 2023 NODA National AGM and Presidential Gala, where we welcomed in our new President, Christine Hunter-Hughes.

Christine assured me she would be delighted to visit any group in our Region – she just needs to be invited! So, if you would love a visit from the National President don’t forget to send out your invitations early.

I look forward to catching up with you all in the coming months.

London District 3 – Des Wilby

London District 4 – Robin Kelly.

Although this is supposedly a quiet period for shows, District 4 generated reports on nine productions, comprising two youth theatre, two plays and nine musicals. Don’t forget, if you don’t invite, we can’t report. And without a report, there can be no nomination for NODA awards!



Speaking of awards, although the Barnes Class Programme Award was collected on behalf of Eldorado Musical Productions at this year's NODA London Celebration Day, the person mainly responsible was unfortunately away that day. So EMP invited me to present the award to Katrina Summerfield at a company Garden Party. Never being one to turn down an invitation to any society event (no hint intended there, of course!) I was happy to oblige.

Another social invitation came from Bob Hope Theatre in July, celebrating eighty years since its original formation as Eltham Little Theatre. Bob Hope was born in Eltham and the theatre was renamed in 1982 in his honour in recognition of his support. The theatre itself has benefitted from huge improvements in recent years. Chair Jennifer Sims is pictured here at the event with a portrait of the great man, taken at the

celebration event.



London District 5 – Phil Wilcox

Over the past few months, there have been some fascinating and high standard productions in my District. Parish Players, for example, put on an imaginative version of Matthew Barker's Enchanted April.

I have attended two totally contrasting outdoor plays, CODA's light-hearted and original mixture (with songs) of two Lewis Carroll stories (Alice, Through Wonderland). On the other hand, there was Mayhem's dramatic, high quality, version of Macbeth, in Wimbledon.

Also in Wimbledon, Edge Hill Players presented (an indoor) high standard version of Oliver!, with several outstanding performances.

Finally, on a downbeat note, Epsom Players sadly had to give up their NODA membership during the year for financial reasons. They will be missed.

London District 6 – Paul Daynes

The spring and summer have brought a great mix of productions to District 6. Two open air Shakespeare's, two high energy musicals, two well-known plays and a prelude for the Edinburgh Fringe.

Theydon Bois Drama Society presented a few of the best scenes from A Midsummer Night's Dream for a private function at Epping Forest's Copp'd Hall and then brought it to the open space around the Village Hall for their audiences. A wonderful ensemble piece with good actors and audience participation made for a magical May evening. You can read more about this adventure in summer edition of NODA Today.

The Greek Theatre Players gave their annual Shakespeare production at the inspiring Greek Theatre; this year The Winter's Tale. The players' eloquence and comfort with the Bard's verse provided an evening of lyrical speeches and superb oration.

Loughton Amateur Dramatic Society (LADS) took on Ian Hislop and Nick Newman's A Bunch of Amateurs with great success that made for a laugh-out-loud performance. There were some lovely supportive character acting and good comic delivery from all. Howard Platt did a fine job as the confused Hollywood star playing King Lear in a different Stratford than he was expecting.

In July the Woodhouse Players performed Christopher Fry's translation of Jean Anouilh's Ring Round the Moon. This French play presents a satirical prod at class prejudices and with a cleverly complex plot it gives a great vehicle for a large talented cast. There were many tremendous performances and with fine costumes and clever direction the audiences had a very enjoyable evening.

Barking Music and Drama (MAD) had a real smash hit on their hands when they brought Dolly Parton's 9 to 5 – The Musical to the Kenneth More Theatre in Ilford. The standard of singing and acting was first class with some great characterisations. The cast and crew worked very well together and with a large chorus and generous leads this collaboration was a testament to teamwork.

Each summer Havering Music Makers hire the large Queens Theatre in Hornchurch and sell out every night. They deserve their large following as every production provides colour, energy, escapism and musical theatre at its best. This year they gave us Our House - The Madness musical which was enthusiastically received by cheering and dancing audiences. The well-known hits were cleverly woven into a 1980's London love story and brought excellent singing and dancing from this talented group.

And finally, I was thrilled to be able to see a one-act, two-hander at the Redbridge Drama Centre of WP Drama's Two Gun Cohen. It was performed for two evenings as a warm up for their run at this summer's Edinburgh Festival. This fascinating story of Morris Cohen was written by WP Drama member Spencer Simmons and featured Jonathan Meyer and Brian Seaton. It was an extraordinary play that made a great impact on everyone involved. Jonathan explains more in this edition of Curtain Up!

And so, as Summer becomes Autumn, the schedule of plays, reviews and musicals is looking very busy for District 6, 'Break a leg' everyone.

London District 7 – Thomas Lennon

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have messaged me since I joined NODA London. I would also like to thank my predecessor, Paul Holgate, for providing cover for the District in addition to his role as Regional Website Editor. It was greatly appreciated.

Following my initial regional meeting my first event of the year was officiating with my regional colleagues at our NODA London AGM and Celebration Day in Radlett. The event was sold out weeks in advance and on the day the air was electric in anticipation of a possible Regional win from all the District winners. Overall, feedback from the event was very positive and we are already looking forward to next year. Save the date in your diaries - Sunday 16 June 2024.

A visit to Little Oak Wood Open Air Theatre was my next outing to attend a production of **MACBETH** by Garden Suburb Theatre. Thankfully, on the night the rain stayed away for my visit to this totally quaint location for an abridged version of the Bard's work. I look forward to visiting GST again in the future.
www.gardensuburbtheatre.org.uk

On Wednesday 02 August 2023, I had the opportunity to attend the NODA Theatre Summer School at Yarnfield Park in Staffordshire as a day visitor. The welcome extended to us as visitors by Jacquie, Sarah and the team on the day was second to none and the individual experiences during the respective sessions attended were truly inspiring. I'm sure Jacquie will be providing a separate update on the details of the week but please, if you are not already familiar with the event, please take some time to do so.
www.noda.org.uk/summerschool

By the time this article is in print, ELODS, who are celebrating their Platinum Jubilee this year, will have completed their production of **SIX: Teen Edition** in late August and their Jubilee Celebration evening on Saturday 09 September. I'm sure both events will have proved extremely successful. Later in the season

they will be hoping to provide their audiences with '*a glorious feeling*' when staging their production of the classic MGM film musical **SINGIN' IN THE RAIN** in October. www.elods.org.uk

Also scheduled for October, Mill Hill Musical Theatre Company will be '*pouring themselves a cup of ambition*' for their production of Dolly Parton's **9 TO 5 - The Musical**. Coincidentally, I am reliably informed that they too will be celebrating their Platinum Jubilee albeit in 2024. I will endeavour to glean some further information for a future edition. www.mhmtc.co.uk

On the opera front, HGO, the District Flame winner for 2023, will be staging their next production, the fairytale opera **HÄNSEL UND GRETEL** by Engelbert Humperdinck, in November. www.hgo.org.uk

I have been advised it has been a quiet year so far for Finchley & Friern Barnet Operatic Society. Following their AGM in early July I am confident of some exciting developments from their new committee for the year ahead. www.ffbos.com

Wonder Theatre Training Academy are currently planning for the future and I look forward to hearing what they have scheduled for the season. www.wondertheatretrainingacademy.co.uk

As a 'newbie Rep' to NODA London and particularly to the District, I hope to attend as many events as possible in the coming year so please don't forget to add your regional representative invitation to your 'to do' list. You can e-mail me in the first instance at thomas.lennon@noda.org.uk. I look forward to networking with many of you during the season.

London District 8 - Tony Austin

Ruislip Operatic Society have continued their 100 year celebrations with a Grand Dinner and Dance in July, when our London Councillor Pam Armstrong gave a congratulatory speech as she awarded them their Centenary Certificate, receiving an ovation from the 100 or so people present, who consisted not only of ROS members old and young over the years but also friends and helpers provided by other societies in the cooperative spirit found so frequently in NODA London District 8. And their celebrations will not be over until their production of *White Christmas* in November/December. Watch this space as Ruislip Dramatic Society and Proscenium have Centenaries in 2024.

My only summer show was Encore's *Six (Teen Edition)*, rehearsed and performed in a week to a very high standard. And the next is not until the end of October when Argosy Players join WOS (of District 9) for the *Wizard of Oz*, after which it's one a week with Encore's (adult) *The 39 Steps* (their *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* has had to be postponed), Proscenium's *Ladies' Day*, RDS's play (not yet on their website as I write in August), Ricky Players' *Kipps*, and the aforementioned *White Christmas*, with Harefield ADS fitting in when they've decided, followed by two school productions which I shan't hear about until the schools are back, before my Panto season in the New Year. My best wishes to you all.

London District 9 – Carole Baynes

District 9 companies are planning forthcoming productions with their customary enthusiasm. The Chameleons ADS successfully completed their recent production last month with Agatha Christie's melodrama "Verdict". This was a change from their recent run of comedies giving the cast a chance to exhibit their dramatic talents in a more reflective play delighting their audiences once more. They are now most excited to be planning for a winter pantomime - a genre they thoroughly enjoy presenting but have been thwarted to perform for a couple of years.

It was good to see Rachel Spolander at the NODA Celebration Day receive her District Winner Award for the perfect Geraldine in the "Vicar of Dibley" together with Chameleons' newest patron Baby Eliza who made her debut as Geraldine's well disguised 'bump'! Wembley Operatic Society are excited to be teaming up with a local drama romp Argosy Players to stage their next production "The Wizard of Oz". This musical seems to be receiving much publicity at the moment with the controversial version on the West End stage at present. WOS & Argosy will be performing the traditional version I am pleased to say.

KLOS Musical Theatre finally presented “Sister Act” last April after a 3 year wait and are now planning something that is perhaps the polar opposite “Bad Girls The Musical”. This show was not a massive success on the professional stage but is I gather popular with amateur companies - I await this production with interest.

Harrow Opera Workshop will be following their delightful performance of the “Magic Flute” last March by two short operas that are both new to me - Puccini’s “Il Tabarro” and Giancarlo Menotti’s “The Medium” - which they will hopefully now have cast and will soon commence rehearsals. Pump House Theatre Company were thrilled to receive a number of NODA awards this June - after their very successful 50th year in the business performing “One Man Two Guvnors” & “Blackadder Goes Forth” to great acclaim. They are now well into rehearsals for their September production of “Hangmen” a black comedy centring on the musings of executioners. Many amdram members in District 9 will have known the veteran performer Vic Golding - a long term member of KAOS - who has recently died and I understand that there is to be a memorial concert in his honour which is currently being organised.

District 10 – Iain Fowles

Summer truly appears to be over, and I’m looking forward to the Autumn season really kicking off again – and to see all of your fabulous productions.

Since the Spring season I have seen some wonderful summer productions, some highlights include: -

Belmont Theatre

A very clever alternative spin on the classic story of Jekyll and Hyde

Potters Bar Theatre Company

A delightful and colourful presentation of Wizard of Oz, including some very talented young performers

Kings Langley Players

Lovely to see that the Cocktail Bar continues, and a very funny farce – Cash of delivery!

Green Room

An amazing production of Kinky Boots – Green Room continue to keep the standard of amateur theatre at the highest level.

St Albans Musical Theatre Company

School of Rock by St Albans was a wonderful spectacle and the very talented younger performers truly stood out from the crowd.

Centralian Players

A good presentation of the comedy Birthday Club – given the venue, the set was of particular note for this production

Hemel Hempstead Theatre Company

My own company have been busy over the summer with our production of Our House – I ended up directing this show, and also playing the part of Dad – something I won’t be attempting again!

It was so lovely to see so many members of my groups at the annual conference and AGM in June. We were treated to some very entertaining speakers and wonderful entertainment. The awards were also presented of course and I was delighted that some of my members and groups were awarded overall winners in their categories.

If there is anything that I can help with, please do get in touch iain.fowles@noda.org.uk

Look forward to seeing you all over the coming months.

District 11 and 11a – Judith Watsham

It has been a very quiet summer but now that the performance season has kicked off again I have seen some excellent shows, notably *Legally Blonde* from Tring Youth Theatre Project and have several more coming up from the time of writing this (late September) and Christmas. As usual, don't forget to invite me if any companies for whom I am the designated Regional Rep would like a report.

Unfortunately I have noticed that some groups who previously performed two or three times a year have been forced to cut back on the number of shows they offer to their audiences. Whether this is due to rising costs and/or lack of interest from potential directors/production teams or even performers I do not know

Many congratulations to Chesham Musical Theatre Company whose exceptional programme for *My Fair Lady* not only won a top spot at our London Awards Ceremony in June but also knocked out competition from all over the United Kingdom to win the National Trophy at our recent NODA National AGM and Awards in Preston.

London District 12 – Andrew Walter

I became the NODA Representative for District 12 at the height of the Covid pandemic, and just as it has taken some Oxfordshire Dramatic and Operatic societies a while to re-establish themselves, so it has also taken time for me to get to know all the many and various member organisations scattered across the county. It was therefore a particular pleasure to attend the Thame Players' production of "*Tom Jones*" in July. The Players have their own venue, the intimate Players' Theatre, but they understand perfectly how to use the space and "*Tom Jones*" showcased the depth of talent in the company, both on stage and behind the scenes. I hear that it's now an even cooler venue following the installation of air conditioning during the summer, which should prevent patrons from getting too hot under the collar during September's production of "*Little Shop of Horrors*".

It was also fantastic to see two shows staged by Odyssey Theatrical Productions at The Wykham Theatre in Banbury. The senior group presented a joyous and accomplished production of "*Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*" in June, while the youth section took to the stage the following month to present the energetic and engaging "*Back to the 80s*". Both shows were wonderfully imaginative and entertaining, and with Avocet Theatre Company, Banbury Operatic Society and the Youth of Banbury Operatic Society (YOBOS) also performing at The Wykham Theatre it is evidently an important centre for the performing arts in North Oxfordshire. YOBOS made a triumphant return to the NODA London Celebration Day in June, part of their 20th Anniversary celebrations which also included a concert, "*Platinum*", and a remarkable staging of the teen edition of "*Everybody's Talking About Jamie*" after just a week of intensive rehearsal in August.

The third group that I had the privilege of reporting on for the first time was the Stonesfield Players, who staged Neil Simon's "*Plaza Suite*" in Stonesfield Village Hall. This was community theatre at its best, with the Players making the most of their limited resources. With the village cricketers playing a match behind the hall, and the pizza wagon doing a brisk trade in the car park, this was an idyllic summer's evening.

The autumn promises a packed programme of productions, with Abingdon Operatic Society bringing their eagerly-anticipated production of "*Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*" to the Amey Theatre stage during half term week, which should see the Society able to make use of the new theatre foyer for the first time. In the same week Banbury Operatic Society will be presenting "*Kinky Boots*" at The Wykham Theatre, and the same venue will host Avocet Theatre Company's ambitious "*TheatreFest: Banbury*" later in the year.

There are also plays to look forward to. In recent months The Sinodun Players and the Bartholomew Players have both staged "*A Bunch of Amateurs*", providing an opportunity to compare and contrast two excellent productions of this popular piece, but the autumn will see these societies staging two very different works. The Sinodun Players will be presenting Lucy Kirkwood's "*The Welkin*" at The Corn Exchange in Wallingford during October, while the Bartholomew Players will stage Sandi Toksvig's "*Silver Lining*" at the end of November.

Finally, and looking a little further ahead, Oxford Operatic Society will be returning to The New Theatre in January with the 2010 revival version of Lionel Bart's "Oliver!", and I am honoured and excited to have been asked to direct this production for the Society, extending an association that goes back over 35 years. Tickets are already available online!

London District 13 – Cate Naylor

The summer season in District 13 has flown by and I've been so lucky to be invited to 17 shows. Once again, I have been impressed by both by the quality of performances and by the feeling of camaraderie in the societies as they bring their shows to the stage. It is a great joy to travel around the district meeting new people all with the love of theatre and I certainly get the feeling that amateur theatre is in good shape. I am grateful to Nick Humby from District 13 and to Gordon Bird who have stepped in to review a couple of shows for me due to family involvement in the productions.

April began with the wonderful musical *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* performed brilliantly by Reading Operatic Society. I have very fond memories of this musical having performed in it as a schoolgirl many years ago. This was followed by the dark comedy thriller *Dinner* at Progress Theatre and the psychological thriller, *Ravenscroft* at Shinfield Player's Theatre. Both of these had twists and turns and kept the audiences on the edge of their seats. April finished with another feel-good musical, *Our House* from HAODS which was full of Madness songs and had lots of energy.

In May, Twyford and Ruscombe Theatre group presented a play written by one of their members: *Fight them for the Beeches* which was set in a Residential Home complete with an array of feisty residents. This was followed by *Silver Lining* from Progress Theatre a comedy play by Sandi Toksvig also set in a Residential Home with the residents trying to escape from a storm. Obviously residential homes for the elderly make for good drama ideas. My next show was a musical version of *Wind in the Willows* from The Sainsbury Singers, complete with all the riverbank creatures singing and dancing their hearts out as they tried to avert the damage caused by mischievous Mr Toad. I finished the month with Mortimer Dramatic Society for *Last panto in Little Grimley*, a play which anyone involved in amateur dramatics can relate to.

I began June with a HAODS studio production of *Under Milk Wood*. This was performed by only seven actors, and I was transported through their lilting Welsh accents to the seaside town of Llaraggub and the dreams and innermost thoughts of the inhabitants. This was followed by the hard hitting play *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* at Shinfield Players Theatre. Having been delayed by Covid and then Storm Eunice, it was then hit by sickness in the cast, but they managed to perform on the first and last night much to the delight of the audiences. I returned to Progress Theatre for their production of *The Silence of the Sea* a thought-provoking play which was set Nazi France, and used the style silence and the power that it can command to tell the story. In complete contrast, my next show was WLOS's production of *Anything Goes* a musical to get your toes tapping and settle you into 1930's jazz. At the end of the month, I joined the Junior and Middle Youth Group at Shinfield Players Theatre for *Dream On* a youth version of A Midsummer Night's Dream and an excellent way to introduce youngsters to the beauty of Shakespeare. It was a joy to see the group aged 8 to 14 enjoying performing and growing in confidence year on year.

I returned to Shinfield in July, to watch both casts of the Senior Youth Group perform *Grease*. This is a great musical and perfect for any youth group with its brilliant music and energetic choreography. I was next due to make my first trip to join The Community of Hungerford Theatre Company for their production of *Humble Boy*, but sadly, it was cancelled on the day due to sickness in the cast. I hope very much to be able to join the group in the autumn. I returned again this year to the Reading Abbey Ruins to see Progress Theatre's open-air production of *Twelfth Night*. It is such a joy to see Shakespeare performed in the Abbey Ruins and this was an excellent production. I finished the season travelling into District 14 to join Crowthorne Musical Players for their musical revue *Don't Reign on Our Parade* and was treated to an abundance of songs celebrating all things King and Queen.

District 13 continues to be very active in theatre productions and I am privileged to be able to enjoy so many of them, thank you!

London District 14 – Nick Humby

Eight of the thirteen societies produced (two societies offering 2 shows) in the period, all with very good size audiences and a real sense of the amateur theatre community being fully back in business although there remains a real concern over the costs of staging shows and for some attracting new members. It must be hoped that the success of these shows will bolster both funds and membership.

Recent Productions

Crowthorne Musical Theatre Little Mermaid was a delight with some wonderful colourful costumes, beautiful animated projected scenes and a group of Principals who sang the best-known songs in fine voice and with bags of personality.

Crowthorne Musical Theatre's Don't Reign on my parade (covered by Cate Naylor) was a delightful royal musical showcase of songs celebrating Kings, Queens, Princes and Princesses given everyone in the cast a chance to sing a solo line or two.

Maidenhead Operatic Society's Sweeney Todd was a very enjoyable telling of the tender tale with good characterisations, wonderfully executed throat slitting, and some very strong musical performances with good comic touches that did justice to Sondheim's masterpiece.

CATS 'Allo 'Allo is an attractive title for amateur societies tempting audiences with the rose-tinted memories of the marvellous original TV Ensemble cast, it offers amusement to the cast and their friends and family in seeing how close they come to recreating the well-remembered characters and their catch phrases.

Quince Players' Murder Weapon was a cleverly constructed murder mystery over six scenes with some telling flashbacks mixed in and enough mystery to keeping the audience guessing to the end thanks to very well acted principal characters.

Maidenhead Drama Guild's Educating Rita is a wonderful two hander with strong characters with the distinctive accents, good comic touches and emotional heart that engages the audiences and this was an enjoyable show at the Old Court black box venue in Windsor.

Maidenhead Drama Guild's The Brother Grimm Spectaculathon (covered by Andrew Walter) was a spectacular dash through 209 Grimm fairy tales with 43 different roles covered by a company of eight and an excellent vehicle to show of the cast's character acting skills.

Wraysbury Players's Murdered by Death is the first of a trilogy of Agatha Christie comic parodies featuring the inept Inspector Pratt and Miss Maple. It is full of stock whodunnit characters with the usual range of motives and opportunities and with plenty of scope for comic business and dramatic moments. This was without doubt the best of the four productions I have now seen from this society.

SWMTC's Jukebox musical Shout uses the conceit of letters written by five women of different ages to a Sixties women's magazine "Shout" to frame the show with the old-fashioned responses from its agony aunt providing poor advice. It built well as a show to a brilliant conclusion, reminded us of the vibrant sound of the Sixties and the excitement and change of the decade.

Spotlights Musical Theatre Group created a celebratory musical revue titled 'A day at the races' which successfully links thirty songs from the twenty productions that the society has performed over the last thirty years. It was a perfect vehicle for a society with a strong choral Ensemble under an enthusiastic Musical Director to have fun working together to provide an entertaining evening of familiar tunes.

Coming up

A quieter period ahead with only **EBOS's** Chitty Chitty Bang Bang at the end of October and **Maidenhead Operatic Society** The Sorcerer in November booked in ahead of the Pantomime season

NODA London Regional Day – June 18th

The NODA London Regional Day brought together groups from all over the Region to celebrate all that is good in amateur theatre. It included presentations from HEOS Musical Theatre, Kings Langley Players and the Youth Showcase performed by YOBOS (Youth of Banbury Operatic Society). For the first time we were also able to showcase the talents of Wednesday Jones who signed songs from two shows to enable the audience to witness how inclusive theatre can be for those audience members with a hearing impairment. You may remember there was an article about Wednesday in Spring copy of NODA Today. We also had the joy of learning three show songs closing with 'Five Hundred Miles' from *Sunshine on Leith* - great stuff!!

Congratulations to all District and Regional Winners – all justly deserved!!!! Our photographer Michael Bird took some brilliant photographs, so you may wish to purchase some relating to your society to use in publicity material (credited to Michael, of course), and you can do this via his website:

<https://galleries.everybodysmile.co.uk/michaelbirdphotography/event/>

Look for NODA 2023.





FLAME AWARDS 2023

- L01 Stock Exchange Dramatic and Operatic Society (SEDOS)
- L02 Beaufort Players
- L03 Carlton Theatre Group
- L04 Dartford Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society (DAODS)
- L05 Woodmansterne Operatic & Dramatic Society
- L06 The Greek Theatre Players
- L07 HGO Trust
- L08 Ruislip Operatic Society
- L09 Pump House Theatre Company
- L10 Belmont Theatre Company
- L11 Tring Youth Theatre Project
- L11a Chesham Musical Theatre Company
- L12 Musical Youth Company of Oxford (MYCO)
- L13 Starmaker Theatre Company
- L14 Sophie Horrox of East Berkshire Operatic Society (EBOS)



COUNCILLOR'S TROPHY 2023

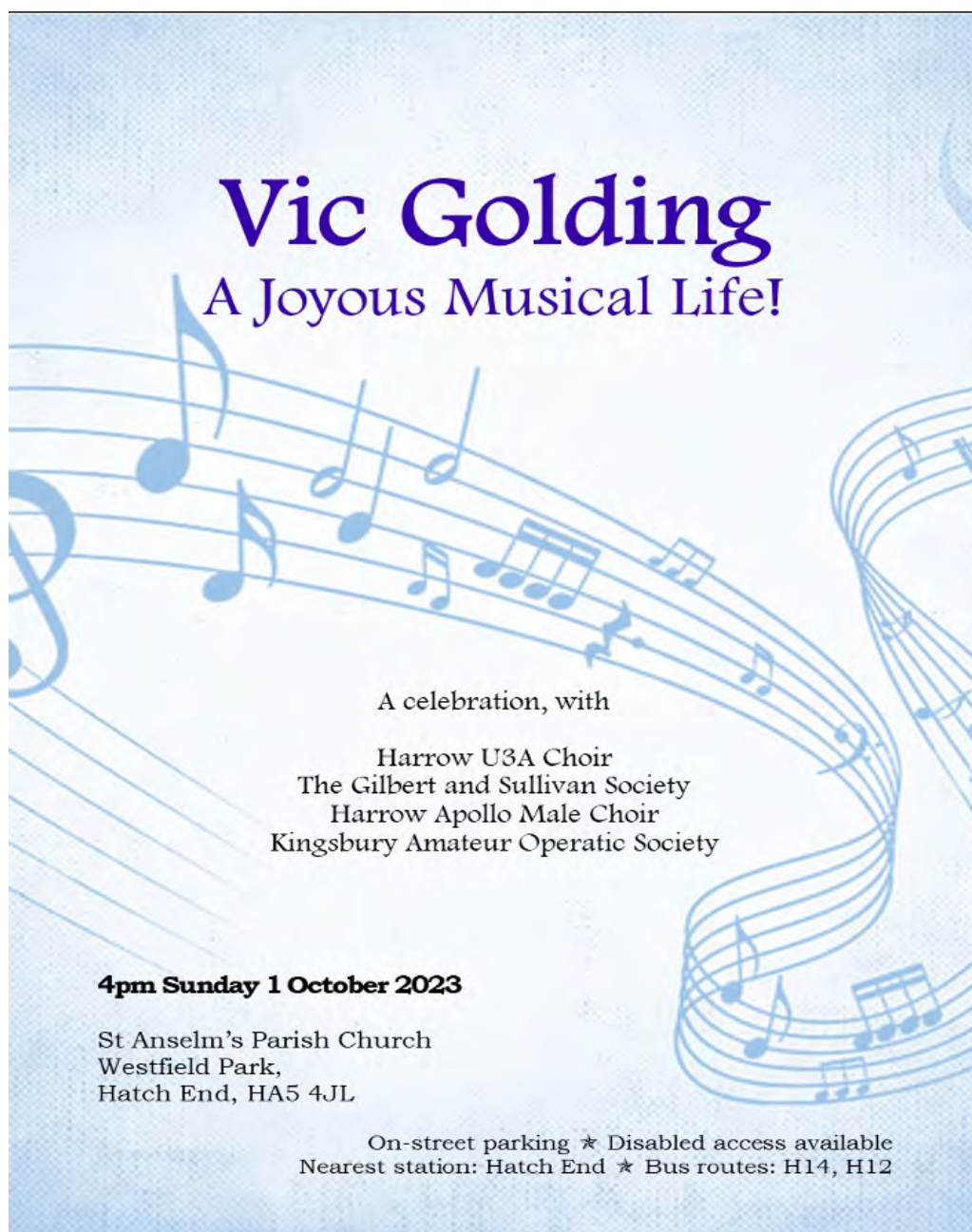
Andrew Rogers of
Loughton Amateur Dramatic Society (LADS)
(for his performance as Richard Nixon
In Frost/Nixon)

Juliet Edgar of KAOS writes:

As you may know, our dear friend and colleague Vic Golding left us in May of 2022 to join a more heavenly chorus and be with his beloved Jenny.

Performing was Vic's lifelong passion, and we were pleased that a concert was been arranged to celebrate his memory on Sunday 1st October; full details appeared in the attached flyer. There was no entry fee but there will be a retiring collection, with proceeds going to St Luke's Hospice.

Everyone was welcome to come along and remember Vic through his favourite pastime: entertaining an audience.

The flyer has a light blue background with a pattern of musical staves and notes. The title 'Vic Golding' is in a large, bold, purple serif font, with 'A Joyous Musical Life!' in a smaller, purple serif font below it. The text 'A celebration, with' is in a small black sans-serif font, followed by a list of four choirs: 'Harrow U3A Choir', 'The Gilbert and Sullivan Society', 'Harrow Apollo Male Choir', and 'Kingsbury Amateur Operatic Society'. The date and time '4pm Sunday 1 October 2023' are in a bold black sans-serif font. The venue 'St Anselm's Parish Church, Westfield Park, Hatch End, HA5 4JL' is in a black sans-serif font. At the bottom, the text 'On-street parking ★ Disabled access available' and 'Nearest station: Hatch End ★ Bus routes: H14, H12' is in a black sans-serif font.

Vic Golding

A Joyous Musical Life!

A celebration, with

Harrow U3A Choir
The Gilbert and Sullivan Society
Harrow Apollo Male Choir
Kingsbury Amateur Operatic Society

4pm Sunday 1 October 2023

St Anselm's Parish Church
Westfield Park,
Hatch End, HA5 4JL

On-street parking ★ Disabled access available
Nearest station: Hatch End ★ Bus routes: H14, H12

PROGRAMME AND POSTER COMPETITION

Congratulations to Chesham Musical Theatre Company for winning the Peacock Trophy in the national competition for best souvenir/deluxe programme. The picture shows their regional representative, Judith Watsham, receiving the trophy from newly elected president, Christine Hunter Hughes.



This year's competition is now open, and I have already received several entries. If you have never entered the competition before then why not give it a go?

Programmes are marked in one of three classes, depending on number of pages. There are separate forms for programmes and posters. To find these, visit

<https://www.noda.org.uk/regions/london/noda-london-poster-programme-competition>

This page also has a link to the current rules of the competition.

Both programmes and posters must carry the current NODA logo and strapline. Programmes must also have the paragraph "An introduction to NODA" or equivalent wording.

Remember to send 5 copies of each programme or poster along with your completed form to me before 31 January 2024. Posters may also be sent electronically as a pdf or jpeg no larger than 5Mb.

Winners will be announced at the NODA London AGM and celebration day on 16 June 2024. I will send feedback forms to all entrants, telling them how their entry was marked and where it was placed in the competition.

Good Luck!

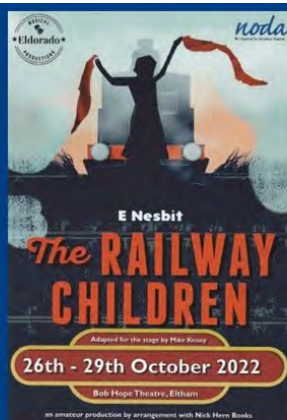
Paul M Holgate

Chair of Poster & Programme Judging Panel

NODA London

Below are the winning entries from NODA London 2023

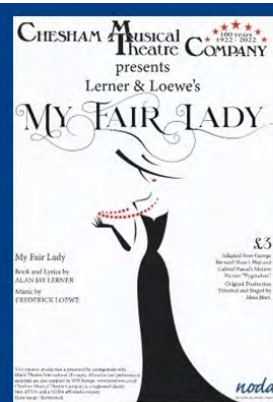
Congratulations to you all!!



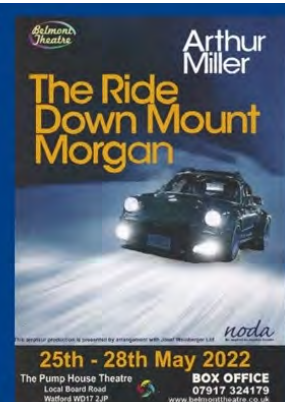
Basic programme
(Barnes class)



Standard programme
(Perkins class)



Souvenir programme
(Peacock class)
NATIONAL WINNER



Poster
(Thomson Leng class)

WINNING ENTRIES FOR 2023

***The Silence of the Sea* – Progress Theatre / Le Nouveau Theatre Libre – 2023**

Article written by Marie French (Producer)
Dorothy Gilbert (Director)
Gareth Saunders (The Uncle)
Leo Burke (The German Soldier)
Hanna Proskura (The Niece)

In 2018, in those heady days before Covid snatched away all our fun, one of the directors at Progress Theatre in Reading suggested for the first time that the theatre could take one of its productions abroad. The play, a unique dramatized version of a French Resistance text written in 1941 entitled *Le Silence de la Mer*, and published in 1942 under the pseudonym of Vercors, had been witnessed back in 1976 by a young Dorothy Gilbert, who had since cherished the thought of bringing it back to the stage. Dorothy lived in France for most of her life, having met her husband there as a young woman and stayed there to work and raise her children for over 30 years. Back in the UK now to be near her daughters, she found again her love for the stage and, finally, this extraordinary production seemed ready to be reborn.

The Silence of the Sea was due to have its curtain up in May 2020 at Progress Theatre, marking the 80th anniversary of the events described in the play. The Theatre Libre de Saint Etienne in France invited Progress to perform the production in their theatre in June 2020. Arrangements were made, flights were booked, and as rehearsals began in earnest it was hard to see what could possibly go wrong.

We all know why this event never materialized and alas, the long period of lockdown saw the demise of the Theatre Libre. They had to shut up shop and move all their equipment into storage. The theatre world is always fragile, living on the edge of collapse.

When the project was relaunched in 2022 it was with feelings of regret that the French part of the story could no longer come about. However, Dorothy decided to try again, this time with the idea of finding an attractive venue in or around Montbrison, the town where she had lived and worked for 25 years. This proved challenging, because the main theatre in Montbrison was closed for refurbishment and other venues were either not practicable or unavailable. After much emailing and phoning of acquaintances the suggestion was made that the Chateau de Goutelas could be a possibility. This restored ancient castle has now become a cultural centre. They mostly organize open-air concerts during the summer and have long term ties with the jazz scene because of their history with Duke Ellington. They have no equipped theatre, but they do have a conference room, which could be used with a bit of work.

Dorothy duly contacted the castle through an acquaintance on their committee, Marie-Claude, and was told that we could perform there on 2 and 3 May 2023. It later transpired that the director of the castle had refused permission, feeling that the play didn't fit in with their themes for that year. So enthusiastic was Marie-Claude about the idea that she had privately rented the castle for those two nights. As you can imagine, the political context here did present some challenges. Progress were not allowed to advertise on the castle's website nor to use its name or logo in their marketing. Ah, the politics of the cultural landscape, not enough is understood about it! It all adds to the challenge.

Dorothy went to France in September 2022 to discuss the details with Marie-Claude and to visit the castle again. At the same time arrangements were made to do one performance in the local high school, since the play has a distinctly educational aspect, which it was a shame to neglect. At this point in the preparations the Theatre Libre threw their cap into the ring, offering to help install lighting and sound for the performance. The team felt at last that they were in business.

Our intrepid cast along with Dorothy, producer Marie, technician Iona and Abba, the nanny for Marie and Iona's babies all set off for France at the end of April. The team had 2 days to prepare the room and rehearse before the first performance. In France they had the added difficulty of requiring subtitles so that the audience could follow as the play was performed in English. These had been laboriously typed up and prepared by Dorothy on a PowerPoint presentation and were skilfully handled by Iona during the performances. Marie, with minimal equipment, managed to perform the sound which had been prepared for her by Richard Saunders, Sound Technician at Progress Theatre. The Theatre Libre lent a technician, Samuel, to set up and run the lighting. Props and furniture were all supplied by local friends and delivered

to the chateau and lugged up the stairs by kind volunteers and overworked members of the cast. The costumes, including a full German officer's uniform, which had filled two entire suitcases on the flight, were carefully ironed and hung up in the dressing area provided.

The marketing was mainly done through the local schools, so that the majority of people who came were either teachers or former students. The team performed to an audience of about 30 the first night and 60 the second. A glass of wine was included with the ticket, not an expensive outlay in France!

The story of brave French citizens showing their resistance to the Nazi invasion is one which is very close to French hearts, even today so long after the events. The performance took place in an area of the country quite near the demarcation line, where there are many stories of rescues and smuggling people over the border into safety, including from Dorothy's husband's own family. The audiences both evenings were riveted by the story and full of praise for the performances. As is inevitable in all amateur performances the team felt woefully under-rehearsed, but the cast stayed away from the temptations of wine and champagne, battened down the hatches, and provided stunning performances every time.

The performance at the school proved interesting. It was very spartan, with simple chairs and no lighting. The audience was about 150 young people aged 15-18, including 2 classes of technical students, all boys, not renowned for their calm or good behaviour. The students, however, were spellbound throughout. This tale of a young man, fighting for his country, falling in love, trying to understand where his duty lies, clearly spoke to these young French children. They applauded with great enthusiasm and after the play the team did a Q&A session where the students asked lots of intelligent questions. Some of the girls also tried to get hold of Leo on Instagram – but that's another story!

The trip to France was an enchanting experience for everyone involved. The Progress cast and crew were received with warmth and enthusiasm. The chateau was in the most beautiful setting and the sun chose to grace the whole trip. It was a lot of work to organize and meant calling in a lot of favours, but everyone felt it had been worth it. Despite the inevitable costs, thanks to the huge input from volunteers, the offer of the venue for free and some fundraising to subsidise the travel, the theatre even made a profit from the performances. The Theatre Libre have been in touch to ask if Progress would like to work with them again. Who knows?

From Cate Naylor District 13 Representative

This was a bold choice for a play, and the subject matter; Nazi France, and the style of using silence and the power that it can command were very demanding. The production was thought provoking and certainly challenged the conventions of what we normally expect from traditional amateur dramatics. In the story, an elderly Frenchman and his niece have their house requisitioned by the Nazi's and are forced to have a young German soldier come to live with them during Nazi occupation. Although the story is narrated by the uncle, it is only the German Officer Werner who directs speech to the others. Powerless to turn him away, the uncle and his niece resist him with silence – a silence that becomes their most powerful weapon.

This play was an evident passion project for Dorothy the director, and it was very interesting to learn that as well as developing the play for Progress Theatre, the group had taken the play to perform in France. Dorothy had clearly worked with the three actors to understand their characters the relationships between them all and the three very different styles of acting required. The cast were brilliant in their portrayal of their characters and they communicated the powerful story with poignancy and power.

The lovers, set against the gorgeous view of the French countryside

I believe that once again the sun is going to shine on Europe"

Our wing of the Chateau. The large window gives onto the conference room. The small top window is our changing area.





Wraysbury Players NODA London regional winner of The Constance Power Trophy of Encouragement

The Wraysbury Players were unable to send a representative to the NODA London Celebration day in June, so it was a great pleasure to present them with the London

Region Award at their subsequent production, the wonderful spoof Agatha Christie comedy *Murdered by Death*. Nick Humby, the District 14 rep, to his surprise, was invited on stage at the final curtain call to present Jim Minter, the Chair and member for forty years, with the certificate and read the citation.

“Wraysbury Players’ annual pantomime of *Rapunzel* was a delight to see with a strong team of young people involved in the show as dancers and Ensemble but also cast in leading roles giving them an opportunity to develop their confidence, skill, and experience. This very strong young cast were given speaking roles with excellent performances from teenagers.

The sense of a community celebrating amateur dramatics was reinforced by the bold tradition of having a cast line up in the foyer as the curtain comes down so the audience can personally congratulate each cast member and we could hear directly from each of the older and younger members of the cast how much they had enjoyed the show.

These young performers deserve recognition and encouragement”.

Many of the actors from the Pantomime were on stage or front of house for *Murdered by Death* and expect to return for the next Pantomime in January 2024.

They continue their search for new talent with “Wraysbury’s got talent” in September and in a new collaboration with Datchet Players in the neighbouring village which is a good initiative to grow the reach and membership in these challenging financial times.

Nick Humby
District 14

Presidential Gala 2023

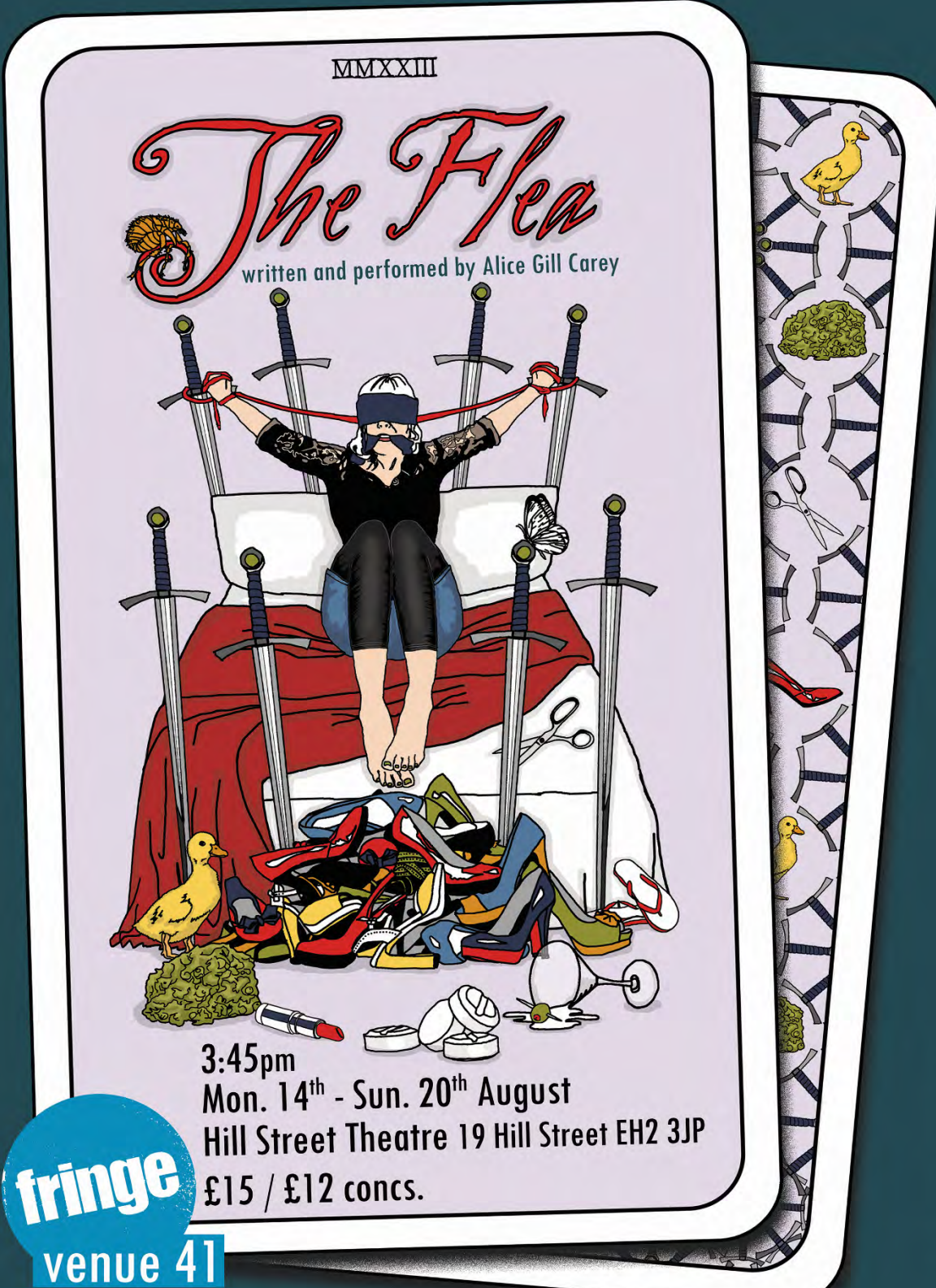
What a pleasure it is was to attend the National AGM and Presidential Gale in Preston in September to welcome the new President, Christine Hunter Hughes. Christine had a very disrupted presidency when Covid-19 struck so we wish her the very best of luck this time and hope she enjoys her many visits to groups around the country. If you wish to invite Christine to your show or celebration please don't hesitate...she can be contacted at christin.hunterhughes@noda.org.uk I'm sure she'll be delighted to attend if she's available.

Members of the London Regional Committee (plus some partners) at the Presidential Gale in Preston – don't we scrub up well!



Playing on the Fringe -that's the way to do it!! X 2

My journey to Edinburgh started during the pandemic with an unusual collaboration with a complete stranger. I was stuck at home, in the middle of chemotherapy with no hair, feeling miserable. I decided to do an on-line course called, Make a Solo Show with Facciocose Theatre Company. The course leader made break out rooms and thus we met our accountability partners, mine was a girl called Julia Vita. We had homework, to write our ideas and the next week we listened to each other and gave feedback.



MMXXIII

The Flea

written and performed by Alice Gill Carey

3:45pm
Mon. 14th - Sun. 20th August
Hill Street Theatre 19 Hill Street EH2 3JP
£15 / £12 concs.

fringe
venue 41

graphic design: suzy@suzydavies.net

I found I enjoyed writing and soon became absorbed in the process and I stopped worrying about covid and cancer. I even wove the short haircut into the story line, The Flea was organic and healing. Once I had written 'The End' there was nothing else to do but perform it!

It received rave reviews at two sold out performances at the Camden Fringe with Julia directing and I managed to raise over £300 for the charity Solace. It worked. I could hold an audience for 60 minutes and learn all my own lines!

Then, with covid over and the all clear, it was back to teaching Drama for me, in a large London secondary school teaching from Year 7 to A Level .

This year I have decided life is too short and I only have a limited amount of energy left, so Edinburgh it had to be. I won a wonderful NODA award for my acting this year and this has spurred me into believing in my performance skills. The writing gained praise and the story is an important one to tell, a mixture of truth and creativity. The first lines are directly to the audience

*I've tied myself up,
Literally and metaphorically I am bound and gagged.
I can't move.*

I had to get my haircut again for the climax of the play to work but that is a small price to pay! Securing a venue and accommodation was not as hard as I thought. I had a friend who went to Edinburgh to look for venues for their own show and they put me in touch with the Hill Street Theatre, a local theatre which had Derek Douglas (also a Drama Teacher) in charge and after a couple of chats and the transfer of money I was on their schedule. The venue is a Quaker Meeting House that gets transformed to a theatre just for the Fringe.

Derek said to cut the play to 55 minutes or the audience will get up and start going to the next show. It sounds daunting and the most scary part is the amount of other shows that are on! How does an audience decide what to see? Will there be an audience for my show? Will I have poured money down the drain? I hope not.

I would love to write more, act more and direct shows without the massive time and pressure constraints of the teaching world. Here's to 2023 opening new doors.

Alice Gill-Carey

TWO-GUN COHEN AT THE EDINBURGH FRINGE (AUGUST 2023)

For a week in early August 2023, the whirlwind that is known as the Edinburgh Fringe became my world in its entirety. We had rehearsed for months and then, by way of a preview, performed Two-Gun Cohen for two performances in July at the Redbridge Drama Centre. It was well received. As a warm-up for the main performances, it prepared us well and our week at the Edinburgh Fringe was a great success.

So, who were 'we'? I played Morris 'Two-Gun' Cohen and Brian Seaton played Seymour Major in what was now a two-hander. Spencer Simmons was the driving force, our director, producer and financier, light and sound operator. Ten years ago, Spencer had directed Two-Gun Cohen with me playing the lead and four actors, including Brian, playing multiple roles. It had come about when Spencer inherited a travel case with the initials MAC embossed on it. After many years, he discovered that it had belonged to Morris Abraham Cohen and having researched his life, he embarked on writing a play with the help of his relative, Liam Rand, based on as much of the remarkable life of Morris that he could squeeze into about two hours.

It didn't stop there. Spencer's ambition had always been to stage his play at the Edinburgh Fringe. Life intervened, trips working abroad and then the Covid pandemic. At the Edinburgh Fringe, productions have about an hour to 'get in, get on and get out', so Spencer got together with Brian and they pared down the Two-Gun Cohen script from a play with five actors at around two hours long to a play for two actors and

around fifty-five minutes long. As Two-Gun Cohen, the bulk of the lines fell to me with Brian, as Seymour Major, steering the narrative through the play and having the stage to himself to deliver the final epilogue.



And now, we were in Edinburgh. Although WP Drama was the banner under which we staged our play, it was Spencer's production. He booked the Space on the Mile, a 60 seat black-box theatre for us to perform at 7.35pm each evening from Monday 7th to Saturday 12th August. The theatre was a large banqueting suite in the Radisson Blu Hotel converted into a black box theatre. Brian took the train, but I travelled to Edinburgh with Spencer who drove up on the prior Saturday, taking with us our minimal props. We arrived late that afternoon at the flat that Spencer had rented for the two of us for the week. It was a long, tiring day and then we were up very early on the Sunday to get to the theatre for an 8.50am technical rehearsal. Brian was also our techie who set up the sound and lighting for Spencer to operate, but the fairly basic set-up at the theatre caused problems. Brian overcame the problems and Spencer was able to run through the various light and sound sequences, but that meant we were not actually able to run a rehearsal. When time was up, we went to the Press Office and the Fringe Office to pick up our posters and flyers, to register our presence and to get an idea of how things worked around the Fringe. By the time I got back to the flat, I was shattered and snatched forty winks. The three of us joined up that evening at a restaurant where unexpectedly, I could not finish my meal – THIS JUST NEVER HAPPENS! I realised later that I had not slept enough the night before travelling up and then had little sleep the night before the technical rehearsal and the result was that I was feeling pretty rough. Fortunately, I could sleep in on the Monday morning and felt better. Brian came over to the flat that Monday afternoon and we ran a rehearsal before our opening night. Our first performance was good and we got better and better until our last performance on the Saturday was absolutely brilliant. The copious amount of applause assured us that we were getting it right.

Our play was twenty pages long and apart from the final page, which Brian had to himself, the nineteen pages were pretty much entirely down to me. I was feeling the pressure, so I stayed in the flat each day and would spend a couple of hours each day reciting my lines from beginning to end. I would spend the rest of the time just remaining quiet and calm before I joined Brian and Spencer at 6.00pm.

After each performance, I felt exhilarated and satisfied. I believe that most actors feel that way if they feel that they have done a good job. We would find somewhere to eat and chill before returning to our respective abodes and then repeat the process each day until the performance on the last day of our performing week. The only show that I saw all week and it was Frank Skinner. It was good to laugh and a fabulous end to a great week that I thoroughly enjoyed – our brilliant show in the good company of Brian and Spencer.

Then, the journey home and once there, that feeling of slowly coming back down to earth and wondering why I was not on stage this evening. Life moves on

Jonathan Meyer

Reflections on NODA Theatre Summer School 2023 – from a visitor

As a new Regional Representative I was very keen to visit the NODA Theatre Summer School. I had heard such a lot of positive things about it....so I thought I would give you a brief update after my visit

I had the opportunity to join the Visitors Day of the NODA Theatre Summer School at Yarnfield Park, Stone, just off the M6 in Staffordshire and to experience this extraordinary intensive learning environment about so many aspects of Amateur Theatre. The Visitors Day is open to anyone who wants to find out more about the school before committing to join for the full week in a later year. This year the Summer School ran from 29th July to 5th August, from Saturday night to Friday with four sessions a day each weekday. On my visit I sampled the Pantomime In Performance, So you want to be a Musical Director and the Introduction to Stage Management courses. It was clear that the groups of around a dozen students on each had bonded in the first few days regardless of their previous experience of the school or the topic, creating a very supportive learning environment led by very personable knowledgeable tutors. In the pantomime session the group worked collaboratively to explore a script for Sleeping Beauty to understand the structure, comedy and traditions of the genre. In the MD session I saw a masterclass format with each student being guided by the Tutor on how to MD an excellent 6 piece, professional band learning songs from Ghost with fellow students encouraging and singing along. In the Stage Management course I saw the students work individually to mark up a 10 page script as a prompt copy for use the next day running lighting and sound cues.

There was an enthusiastic endorsement from all the students I spoke to, around a quarter were first time attendees, but many return each year for another course and it was clear that the school creates a very safe space to experiment and learn, and gives students a very practical experience to take back into their societies. The accommodation is nearby onsite and there was a good restaurant with choice of meals included,

The booking window for Summer School opens on December 1st and some courses fill up quite quickly. Bursaries are available to support students. Details of the courses are released a fortnight beforehand so that prospective students have an opportunity to see what's on offer.

If you would like more information about the 2023 School, you can find it on the NODA website (<https://www.noda.org.uk/events/noda-theatre-summer-school-2023/summerschool>) or drop me an email to chat about my experience at thomas.lennon@noda.org.uk



WHAT'S ON IN THE LONDON REGION

SHREK the musical

04 Oct 23 - 07 Oct 23

Nomads Musical Theatre

Corn Exchange RG14 5BD

Box Office: 01635 522733

www.cornexchangenew.com

BETTY BLUE EYES

06 Oct 23 - 14 Oct 23

Shinfield Players Theatre

Shinfield Players Theatre RG2 9DF

www.shinfieldplayers.org.uk/booktickets

HELLO GOODBYE by Peter Souter

06 Oct 23 - 14 Oct 23

Woodhouse Players

Welsh Church Hall E11 1HR

www.ticketsource.co.uk/woodhouseplayers

THE BROWNING VERSION by Terence Rattigan

09 Oct 23 - 14 Oct 23

Erith Playhouse

Erith Playhouse DA8 1QY

Box Office: 0333 666 3366

www.ticketsource.co.uk/erith-playhouse-limited

LEGALLY BLONDE the musical

10 Oct 23 - 14 Oct 23

Radlett Musical Theatre Company (RMTc)

Radlett Centre WD7 8HL

www.rmtc.org.uk

FROM STAGE TO SCREEN (concert)

11 Oct 23 - 14 Oct 23

East Berkshire Operatic Society (EBOS)

Pinewood Theatre RG40 3AQ

www.ticketsource.co.uk/ebos

A BUNCH OF AMATEURS by Ian Hislop and Nick

Newman

11 Oct 23 - 14 Oct 23

Eldorado Musical Productions

Bob Hope Theatre SE9 5TG

Box Office: 020 88503702

www.bobhopetheatre.co.uk

MURDER WITH GHOSTS by Simon Brett

12 Oct 23 - 15 Oct 23

Garden Suburb Theatre

Upstairs at the Gatehouse N6 4BD

<https://upstairsatthegatehouse.ticketserve.com/ticketbooth/shows/1173647523>

COME TO THE CABARET (concert)

13 Oct 23 - 15 Oct 23

Haverling Music Makers

Tweed Way Hall RM1 4AZ

Box Office: 07850 069837

<https://haverlingmusicmakers.co.uk/tickets>

THE WELKIN by Lucy Kirkwood

17 Oct 23 - 21 Oct 23

Sinodun Players

Corn Exchange OX10 0EG

Box Office: 01491 825000

www.cornexchange.org.uk/whats-on/the-welkin

SINGIN' IN THE RAIN

17 Oct 23 - 21 Oct 23

ELODS

Wyllyotts Theatre EN6 2HN

Box Office: 01707 645005

www.elods.org.uk

BAD GIRLS the musical

18 Oct 23 - 21 Oct 23

KLOS Musical Theatre

Winston Churchill Theatre HA4 7QL

Box Office: 02082 072340

www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on?q=bad%20girls

DIING DONG! (musical revue)

18 Oct 23 - 21 Oct 23

Woodmansterne Operatic & Dramatic Society

St Peters Church Hall SM7 3NR

Box Office: 07849 762294

www.ticketsource.co.uk/wods

CARRIE the musical

18 Oct 23 - 21 Oct 23

Bromley Players

Bob Hope Theatre SE9 5TG

www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on/eltham/bob-hope-theatre/carrie-the-musical

THE HOLLOW by Agatha Christie

19 Oct 23 - 21 Oct 23

Swanley Light Opera Group

Mick Jagger Centre DA1 2JZ

Box Office: 0333 666 3366

www.ticketsource.co.uk/SLOG

A BUNCH OF AMATEURS by Ian Hislop and Nick

Newman

19 Oct 23 - 21 Oct 23

The Centralian Players

Henderson HUB WD5 0AR

Box Office: 01923 227392

www.ticketsource.co.uk/centralianplayers/e-pxvevg

CRY-BABY the musical

19 Oct 23 - 21 Oct 23

Starmaker Theatre Company

Alan Cornish Theatre RG5 4JZ

www.starmaker.org.uk/boxoffice

THE VICAR OF DIBLEY by Ian Gower and Paul

Carpenter

19 Oct 23 - 21 Oct 23

Theydon Bois Drama Society

Theydon Bois Village Hall CM16 7ER

Box Office: 01992 919038

www.theydondrama.org/whats-on

IOLANTHE

19 Oct 23 - 21 Oct 23

Julian Light Operatic Society

Questors Theatre W5 5BQ

Box Office: 020 85675184

www.questors.org.uk/event.aspx?id=1111

AND THEN THERE WERE NONE by Agatha Christie

20 Oct 23 - 28 Oct 23

Mortimer Dramatic Society

St Johns Hall RG7 3TF

www.mortimer-dramatic.org/events-calendar

ANYTHING GOES

24 Oct 23 - 28 Oct 23

Mayhem Theatre Company

Arthur Cotterell Theatre KT1 2AQ

www.ticketsource.co.uk/mayhem

CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG

24 Oct 23 - 28 Oct 23

Abingdon Operatic Society

Amey Theatre OX14 1DE

www.ticketsource.co.uk/abingdonoperatic

A TOMB WITH A VIEW by Norman Robbins

24 Oct 23 - 28 Oct 23

Southside Players

Drayton Arms SW5 0LJ

Box Office: 07914 657 524

www.southsideplayers.co.uk

THE LADYKILLERS by Graham Linehan

25 Oct 23 - 28 Oct 23

New Stagers Theatre Company

St Annes Church Hall SW18 2RS

Box Office: 07814 611239

www.newstagers.co.uk/the-ladykillers

9 TO 5 the musical

25 Oct 23 - 28 Oct 23

Mill Hill Musical Theatre Company

Hartley Hall NW7 2JA

www.ticketsource.co.uk/mhmtc

BETTY BLUE EYES

25 Oct 23 - 28 Oct 23

Chingford Amateur Dramatic & Operatic Society
(CADOS)

Mornington Hall E4 7ER

Box Office: 07445 650935

www.cados.org

VERDICT by Agatha Christie

25 Oct 23 - 28 Oct 23

Belmont Theatre Company

Pump House Theatre WD17 2JP

Box Office: 07917 324179

www.belmonttheatre.co.uk/box-office

THE WIZARD OF OZ

25 Oct 23 - 28 Oct 23

WOS Productions

Winston Churchill Theatre HA4 7QL

www.wos-productions.org.uk

KINKY BOOTS

25 Oct 23 - 28 Oct 23

Banbury Operatic Society

Wykham Theatre OX16 9HY

www.banburyoperaticsociety.co.uk/tickets**THE ADDAMS FAMILY**

25 Oct 23 - 28 Oct 23

Sainsbury Singers

Queen Anne's Performing Arts Centre RG4 6DX

www.ticketsource.co.uk/sainsburysingers**DEATH AND THE MAIDEN** by Ariel Dorfman

26 Oct 23 - 28 Oct 23

Henley Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society
(HAODS)

HAODS Studio RG9 2BP

www.ticketsource.co.uk/haodshenley**LITTLE SHOW OF HORRORS** A Musical Spooktacular

Cabaret

26 Oct 23 - 28 Oct 23

Wimbledon Light Opera Society

Wimbledon Village Hall SW19 4QD

www.wlos.org.uk/tickets**TIME OF MY LIFE** by Alan Ayckbourn

26 Oct 23 - 28 Oct 23

Loughton Amateur Dramatic Society (LADS)

Lopping Hall Loughton

Box Office: 07552 736110

www.ticketsource.co.uk/lads**CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG**

31 Oct 23 - 04 Nov 23

East Berkshire Operatic Society (EBOS)

Wilde Theatre RG12 7PA

Box Office: 01344 484123

www.ebos.org.uk/productiondetail.asp?show=chitty**HOLIDAY INN**

31 Oct 23 - 04 Nov 23

Green Room Productions

Wyllyotts Theatre EN6 2HN

Box Office: 01707 645005

www.greenroomproductions.co.uk**BLOOD WEDDING** by Federico Garcia Lorca

01 Nov 23 - 04 Nov 23

Progress Theatre

Progress Theatre RG1 5HL

www.ticketsource.co.uk/progress theatre/blood-wedding/e-igqbma**CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG**

01 Nov 23 - 04 Nov 23

Encore Theatre Company

Winston Churchill Theatre HA4 7QL

Box Office: 01895 73737

www.encoretheatre.co.uk**GLOC-BUSTERS!** (compilation)

01 Nov 23 - 04 Nov 23

GLOC Musical Theatre

St Benedict's School W5 2ES

www.glocmt.co.uk/whats-on**YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN**

02 Nov 23 - 04 Nov 23

Maidenhead Musical Comedy Society

Kenton Theatre RG9 2BS

Box Office: 01491 525050

<https://kentontheatre.co.uk/event/young-frankenstein/>**LADIES' DAY** by Amanda Whittington

06 Nov 23 - 11 Nov 23

Proscenium

Compass Theatre UB10 8PD

Box Office: 01895 250615

www.hillingdontheatres.uk**HAMP** by John Wilson

06 Nov 23 - 11 Nov 23

Erith Playhouse

Erith Playhouse DA8 1QY

Box Office: 0333 666 3366

www.ticketsource.co.uk/erith-playhouse-limited

COMPANY

07 Nov 23 - 11 Nov 23
Potters Bar Theatre Company
Wyllyotts Theatre EN6 2HN
Box Office: 01707 645005
<https://pottersbartheatrecompany.co.uk/next/>

ELF the musical

07 Nov 23 - 11 Nov 23
St Albans Musical Theatre Company
Alban Arena AL1 3LD
Box Office: 01727 844488
www.samtc.org.uk

ACT NATURALLY by Giles Scott

09 Nov 23 - 11 Nov 23
Faringdon Dramatic Society
Elms Primary School SN7 7HY
www.faringdondramatic.org.uk/archives/act-naturally-2023/

LADIES' DAY by Amanda Whittington

09 Nov 23 - 12 Nov 23
WP Drama
Redbridge Drama Centre E18 2RB
<https://wpdrama.co.uk/>

THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE

adapted by Glyn Robbins
09 Nov 23 - 12 Nov 23
Croydon Operatic & Dramatic Association
(CODA)
Selsdon Hall CR2 8LA
<https://codashows.co.uk/product/the-lion-the-witch-and-the-wardrobe>

HOLIDAY INN

14 Nov 23 - 18 Nov 23
Centre Stage London
Bridewell Theatre EC4Y 8EQ
www.centrestage.london/

CALENDAR GIRLS the musical

14 Nov 23 - 18 Nov 23
BROS Theatre Company
Hampton Hill Theatre TW12 1NZ
www.ticketsource.co.uk/brostheatrecompany

THE SORCERER

16 Nov 23 - 18 Nov 23
Maidenhead Operatic Society
Bourne End Community Centre SL8 5SX
www.mos-uk.org

A TRUESICAL songs from musicals based on true events

16 Nov 23 - 18 Nov 23
Loughton Operatic Society
Lopping Hall Loughton
www.ticketsource.co.uk/los

1940-THAT GLORIOUS SUMMER by Nick

Hardey & Tony Keyho
16 Nov 23 - 18 Nov 23
Harefield Amateur Dramatic Society
St Marys Church Hall UB9 6BX
Box Office: 01895 253346
www.harefieldamdram.org

THE DARKEST HOUR an evening of Ghostly Tales

17 Nov 23 - 18 Nov 23
Kings Langley Players
Kings Langley Services Club WD4 8BJ
Box Office: 0333 666 3366
<https://klp.org.uk/box-office-2/>

URINETOWN

12 Nov 23 - 19 Nov 23

Tring Theatre Company

David Evans Court Theatre HP23 5QY

<https://courttheatre.co.uk/shows/urinetown>

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

17 Nov 23 - 23 Nov 23

Beaconsfield Musical and Operatic Society
(BMOS)

Curzon Centre HP9 1RG

www.ticketsource.co.uk/bmos

THE TEMPEST by William Shakespeare

22 Nov 23 - 25 Nov 23

Shinfield Players Theatre

Shinfield Players Theatre RG2 9DF

www.shinfieldplayers.org.uk/booktickets

AVENUE Q

22 Nov 23 - 25 Nov 23

Beaconsfield Musical and Operatic Society
(BMOS)

Curzon Centre HP9 1RG

www.ticketsource.co.uk/bmos

KIPPS the new Half a Sixpence musical

22 Nov 23 - 25 Nov 23

Rickmansworth Players

Watersmeet WD3 1EH

www.rickyplayers.co.uk

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE adapted by Sara

Pascoe

23 Nov 23 - 25 Nov 23

Worcester Park Dramatic Society

Adrian Mann Theatre KT17 3DS

Box Office: 01737 760163

www.wpds.co.uk

TITANIC the musical

22 Nov 23 - 02 Dec 23

Stock Exchange Dramatic and Operatic Society
(SEDOS)

Bridewell Theatre EC4Y 8EQ

www.sedos.co.uk/shows/2023-titanic

WHITE CHRISTMAS

29 Nov 23 - 02 Dec 23

Ruislip Operatic Society

Winston Churchill Theatre HA4 7QL

www.facebook.com/RuislipOperatic/?locale=en_GB

CLUE by Sandy Rustin

29 Nov 23 - 02 Dec 23

The Roan Theatre Company

Bob Hope Theatre SE9 5TG

Box Office: 020 88503702

www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on/eltham/bob-hope-theatre/clue

SLEEPING BEAUTY

30 Nov 23 - 02 Dec 23

St Faith's Players

Watermans Arts Centre TW8 0DS

Box Office: 020 8232 1010

www.watermans.org.uk/events/st-faiths-players-present-the-sleeping-beauty

SNOW WHITE & THE SEVEN DWARFS

30 Nov 23 - 03 Dec 23

Crowthorne Amateur Theatrical Society
Crowthorne Parish Hall RG45 7BW

www.ticketsource.co.uk/crowthornecats

EDUCATING RITA by Willy Russell

04 Dec 23 - 09 Dec 23

Erith Playhouse
Erith Playhouse DA8 1QY
Box Office: 0333 666 3366

www.ticketsource.co.uk/erith-playhouse-limited

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

05 Dec 23 - 09 Dec 23

Woodley Light Operatic Society
Alan Cornish Theatre RG5 4JZ

www.wlos.co.uk

DICK WHITTINGTON

30 Nov 23 - 10 Dec 23

Hemel Hempstead Theatre Company
Boxmoor Playhouse HP1 1NP
Box Office: 0333 666 3366

www.hhtheatreco.com/panto2023

ROBIN HOOD AND THE BABES IN THE WOOD by Stephen Duckham

07 Dec 23 - 09 Dec 23

Kings Langley Players
Kings Langley Community Centre WD4 8ET
Box Office: 0333 666 3366

<https://klp.org.uk/box-office-2>

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

07 Dec 23 - 09 Dec 23

Barking Music and Drama
Ripple Centre IG11 7FN

www.dazalweb.com/bmad2022

NATIVITY the musical

08 Dec 23 - 09 Dec 23

Avocet Theatre Company
Wykham Theatre OX16 9HY

www.avocettheatre.co.uk/tickets

THE SNOW QUEEN

13 Dec 23 - 17 Dec 23

Maidenhead Drama Guild
Holyport Memorial Hall SL6 2NA

www.maidenhead-drama.org.uk

ROBIN HOOD AND HIS MERRY MEN

01 Jan 24 - 14 Jan 24

Woodford Pantomime
Sir James Hawkey Hall IG8 0BG
Box Office: 01992 524371

www.ticketsource.co.uk/woodfordpantomime

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

13 Jan 24 - 20 Jan 24

Arrow Players
St Edmunds Hall HA6 1QS
Box Office: 07719 968 044

www.arrowplayers.org.uk/tickets

RAPUNZEL

12 Jan 24 - 21 Jan 24
 Shinfield Players Theatre
 Shinfield Players Theatre RG2 9DF
www.shinfieldplayers.org.uk/booktickets

ONCE UPON A TIME a fairy-tale pantomime

01 Jan 24 - 27 Jan 24
 Bob Hope Theatre
 Bob Hope Theatre SE9 5TG
 Box Office: 020 88503702
www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on/eltham/bob-hope-theatre/once-upon-a-time-a-fairytale-pantomime

SWEET CHARITY

06 Mar 24 - 09 Mar 24
 Panda Players
 Elgiva Theatre HP5 1HR
www.pandaplayers.co.uk/productions

THE GREAT GATSBY adapted by Amie Bailey

07 Mar 24 - 09 Mar 24
 Kings Langley Players
 Kings Langley Community Centre WD4 8ET
 Box Office: 0333 666 3366
<https://klp.org.uk/box-office-2>

SISTER ACT

20 Mar 24 - 23 Mar 24
 Eldorado Musical Productions
 Bob Hope Theatre SE9 5TG
www.bobhopetheatre.co.uk

DISNEY'S FROZEN THE MUSICAL JR.

12 Apr 24 - 13 Apr 24
 Avocet Theatre Company
 Wykham Theatre OX16 9HY
www.avocettheatre.co.uk/tickets

MATILDA Jnr

26 Apr 24 - 27 Apr 24
 Newbury Youngstars
 Arlington Arts Centre RG14 3BQ
www.facebook.com/NewburyYoungStars

ME AND MY GIRL

07 May 24 - 11 May 24
 Vale Musical Society
 David Evans Court Theatre HP23 5QY
<https://courttheatre.co.uk>

Why not share news of your next production?**You should include:**

Name of production
 From date – to date
 Name of Society
 Venue, post code
 Box office number
 Box Office website
 Company Website

EXAMPLE**THE SOUND OF MUSIC**

25 Sep 23 - 29 Sep 23
 Kettering & District Theatrical Society
 Lighthouse Theatre, NN15 6PB
 Box Office: 01536 414141
 Box Office website:
 Company website: www.kitts.co.uk

You may submit as many shows as you like and they will be removed when the production has taken place.

The fixture list also appears on the NODA London Facebook page and the NODA website. Contact Paul Holgate at paul.holgate@noda.org.uk

Thank you – Ed.