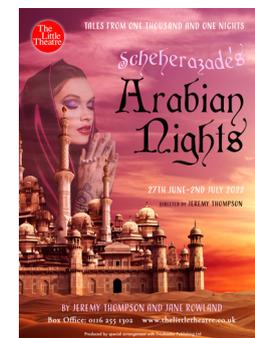
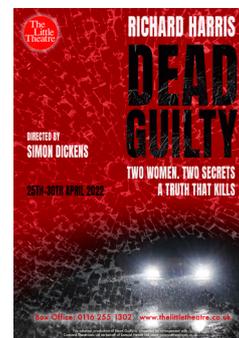
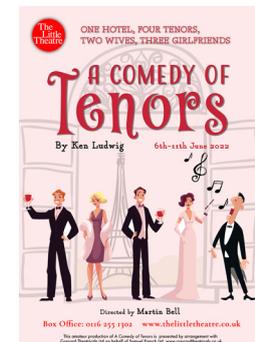
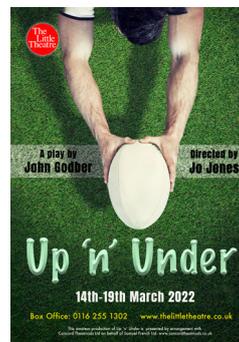
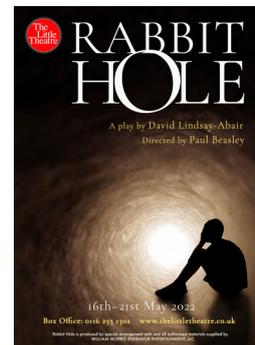
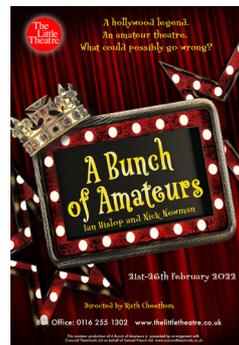


SCENE

The Newsletter of the Leicester Drama Society

Our New 2022 Season...

ABBA Sensation	6 February
Round the Horne	8 February
LGS Big Band	11 February
Hypnomagic	12 February
A Bunch of Amateurs	21–26 February
LDS Production	Directed by Ruth Cheetham
Salad Days	4–5 March
Up 'n' Under	14–19 March
LDS Production	Directed by Jo Jones
One Act Play Festival	24–26 March
Pinocchio	1–2 April
LDS Youth Theatre Production	Directed by Paul Phillips
Spotlight	7–9 April
Dead Guilty	25–30 April
LDS Production	Directed by Simon Dickens
Ceri Dupree	2–4 May
Jersey Beats	5–6 May
John Shuttleworth	7 May
Rabbit Hole	16–21 May
LDS Production	Directed by Paul Beasley
Sister Act	24–28 May
A Comedy of Tenors	6–11 June
LDS Production	Directed by Martin Bell
Calendar Girls	14–18 June
Scheherezade's Arabian Nights	27 June –2 July
LDS Production	Directed by Jeremy Thompson



Inside

2 Editorial
Trustees

3 Panto
Bingo!

4 Members'
Notes

5 Reviews

8 Cast
Notices

9 In Our
Time book
offer



The Little Theatre
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Theatre Manager ▶ Graham Muir

Leicester Drama Society Ltd Board of Trustees
(elected unless otherwise stated)

Chairman & Technical Trustee ▶ Andy Crooks

Treasurer ▶ Charles Moss

Company Secretary (Appointed) &
Co-opted Trustee ▶ Rob Thirlby

Honorary Secretary ▶ Mary Jones

Trustee for Productions ▶ John Ghent

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Trustee for Marketing ▶ Jeremy Thompson

Trustee without specific
responsibility ▶ Simon Dickens

Other Board Attendees

Development Programme Director ▶ Jenny Harding

Minutes Secretary ▶ Lisa Thirlby

Scene

Editor: Emma Bamford
Design: Jeremy Thompson

Contributions to *Scene* are invited. Our deadline is a week before the end of each month – but if you have a story let us know before then to guarantee that we reserve space for you. Contact us via email using the email above.

All photos in each edition of *Scene* are by the fabulous Sally Evans, unless otherwise stated. If members use any images of Little Theatre productions in any social media post please give a photo credit to the person who took the photo. In most cases, for production photos, this will be Sally Evans.

Emma Bamford

Editorial

Hello everyone and welcome to December's edition of *Scene*!

IT'S BEHIND YOUUUUUU!

What is? Panto? No, you fool, that started yesterday, to be exact (sorry, we couldn't *not* have a terrible panto mention in this edition). But in all serious, the cast and crew of *Cinderella* have been working extremely hard and will be putting on a great show – as always – up until 2nd January 2022.

A bit further on in this edition you'll find some other panto related bits and bobs including PANTO BINGO! No prizes, unfortunately, just the fuzzy feeling of a job well done if you manage to get a full house.

Sadly, this is my last post as editor of *Scene*. The last few months have been a lot of fun but thanks to some new job responsibilities, I can't keep up my work on *Scene* at the same time. It's been a pleasure.

Enjoy a safe and happy Christmas, and we look forward to seeing you at panto and beyond!

Best wishes,

Emma x

PS.....

We'd like to thank Emma for her time as Editor of *Scene*, especially through the theatre's closure last year when *Scene* formed the backbone of keeping members informed.

There's now obviously a vacancy for the Editorship... the Editor coordinates the commissioning of articles, badgers and cajoles trustees and others to provide editorial and comes up with entertaining ideas for the magazine... so if you fancy a challenge, then please let Marketing Trustee Jeremy Thompson know you are interested:
jeremy.thompson@thelittletheatre.co.uk

Panto Bingo!

How many of these things will be in *Cinderella* this year? We can't promise all of them! Tick off the things you've seen / heard ...

The audience get squirted with water pistols	Somebody mentions TikTok
The Dame wears at least three different outfits during the show	The cast get chased off a bench by a ghost / monster
Cinderella and the Prince share a romantic duet	The Dame picks on someone in the front rows
The wicked character sings a song about how wicked and nasty they are	'I Wish it Could Be Christmas Everyday' can be heard in the theatre foyer / bar
A little kid gets invited onto the stage and says something that makes everyone laugh	The audience boo the wicked character
'Baby Shark' is played / danced to	The cast sing a song about what job they would do if they weren't in panto



Members' Notes

▶ **Members' Afternoon Tea Party** For many members, staying in touch with theatre friends can be difficult, especially at the present time. We are therefore organising a Members' Afternoon Tea Party on Tuesday 11th January between 2pm and 4pm. So why not come along and meet up with those with whom you've shared the stage before, or worked backstage or elsewhere in the theatre, and catch up on theatre news and gossip...? All members are welcome, old and new, and it's free to attend! If you are interested, please get in touch with the theatre office to give us some idea of numbers attending.

▶ **In Memory...** Two former members have passed away in the last few weeks, Nigel Vincent and Maureen Saunders. Both worked in the back stage area and carried out their tasks with effectively and without fuss, happy memories. Sympathy to both families. **Alan Freckingham**

▶ **Help to run your theatre!** The Little Theatre is a registered charity run by an elected team of trustees, each of whom serves for a limited time period. Ordinarily, at the Annual General Meeting of the Society, there will be an election for vacancies on the Trustees' Committee, but last year this did not take place, for obvious reasons. However, in spring next year, provisionally on Sunday 13th March,

there will be an AGM, and some trustees will be stepping down; having a variety of different trustees is vital to keeping the theatre's governing body relevant and 'on its toes'!

If you would like to help to run your theatre then please consider standing for election. Young or old, experienced or not, being a trustee is a way of helping to keep the theatre running and influencing the direction that it takes. If you're still in the world of work, being a trustee can also look great on your CV...!

In January's *Scene* we'll be taking a closer look at how the theatre is governed and how all members can have a say in what the theatre does. In the meantime, if you would like to know more about getting involved in the theatre's governing body, please contact the current Chair of Trustees Andy Crooks: Andy.Crooks@thelittletheatre.co.uk

LDS 200 CLUB

1st prize - £250 Share Number - 06
2nd prize - £100 Share Number - 21
3rd prize - £50 Share Number - 07



The company of *Cinderella*, who began a mammoth 24-performance run on December 10th. At the time of going to press, the show had sold a massive 95% of seats, a fantastic achievement in these difficult times. We wish the show every success!

Review...

My Mother Said I Never Should (October 2021)

Charlotte Keatley's play debuted in 1989 at The Royal Court theatre in London and since then has gained recognition as the most performed play ever written by a female writer. The play, set in Manchester, Oldham and London, hinges around and follows four generations of women in the same family over half a century highlighting the different compromises accessible to its female characters by delving into the complicated relationships of mothers and daughters.

Firstly for Doris, born at the turn of the century, marriage meant leaving her teaching job to dedicate her life to the family, her daughter Margaret, never really wanting children, found herself juggling work and motherhood and when her own daughter Jackie falls pregnant, she brings up the final member of the family granddaughter, Rosie as her own. The chronology of the play is nonlinear, and the cast had to switch between the timeframes as a static wasteground set provided the background throughout the play, with only the minimum of props and many believable costume changes to indicate the year of each scene, interspersed with the eerie chanting of 'My mother said I never should play with the children in the wood' – that was at times strangely quite frightening.

After the energetic opening when the four members of the cast burst onto the stage as children singing, the pace became increasing slow and hesitant and there were moments when I wished I could have turned up the volume button as audibility was frequently lost. All the cast deftly swept through the decades and were reasonably convincing as lively children before morphing into careworn women, but each made a tentative start before settling into their individual characters, especially Rachel Kitching as Doris, veering from the emotionally obstinate 1940s mother to the more loving grand- and great-grandmother as she softened with age, showing poignancy at the end.

Equally delivering understated performances from expectations to self-control and frustration were Kate Peim and Karen Stevens as mother and daughter, Margaret and Jackie, whose best scenes were made believable when arguing about Rosie, who finally decided to go to live with her real mother. Particularly impressive was Rebecca Hughes as Rosie, played with enthusiasm and hopefulness for the future – she provided the youthful humour that was desperately missing particularly in the first half.

Unfortunately, during the interval, a few dreaded 'gremlins' invaded the lighting desk, resulting in the second half being lit by two white floodlights but, hey-ho, this is live theatre not TV, and the show must go on – which it did with the actors unfazed and seemingly forced to inject the much needed pace that was lacking in the first half and ensuring a smooth finish.

Even 30 years after its premiere, the issues raised in Keatley's play still remain resonant today as women face decisions about careers and motherhood with possibly the best of intentions not always viable.



Review...

Private Lives (November 2021)

Noel Coward's three act comedy of manners *Private Lives* was written in 1930. It follows the fortunes of the well-heeled Elyot and Amanda, who had been married for three years and divorced for five, as they each honeymoon with their new spouses in France and find themselves by chance in the same hotel in adjacent rooms and sharing the same terrace. The comedy arises from the fact that they soon realise they have both made a mistake in marrying their new partners as they still have strong feelings for each other, but their old "can't-live-with-you, can't-live-without-you" relationship soon re-emerges as they alternate moods of happy-go-lucky gaiety or languid romance with bickering and sometimes violent falling out and fighting, before kissing and making up. We become aware that the couple are ideally suited to each other in their refusal to take themselves or anything else much very seriously, and any fleeting moments of sadness and regret are quickly banished by Coward's sparkling comic repartee.

Caitlin Mottram (Amanda) and Jonathan Barnes (Elyot) portray all this very convincingly. Mottram's Amanda is energetic, worldly-wise, suave and fun loving, yet also flighty, and a prey to her whims and the emotion of the moment. Jonathan Barnes' Elyot is the self-assured high-society type, witty with a fun-loving devil-may-care spirit, yet with moments of ironic self-pity and, beneath the confident exterior, we sense both frustration and fragility. Through their dancing and Elyot's singing the actors successfully conjure up the spirit of the roaring twenties, and together they offer us an alluring comic portrait of a couple trapped in a love-hate relationship which they are unwilling and unable to end.

Tracey Holderness' Sibyl is wholly believable as the loyal, clinging and jealous wife of her husband Elyot, a man she hardly knows, and Lawrence Jackson as Victor convinces as a rather stiff and pompous character confused by the situation and by trying to understand his mercurial wife Amanda. They persuade us that Sibyl and Victor are clearly more suited to each other than to the spouses who have abandoned them but, by the end of the play, they too are already bickering and fighting violently.

All four actors offer strong, energetic performances throughout, and lines are delivered clearly and at a pace suitable to Coward's quick-fire dialogue and banter, yet nuanced enough to accommodate the moments of embarrassment and the awkward silences between the couples. Jane Durant as the rough-spoken servant Louise provides additional layers of comedy as the characters struggle to understand her French.

The play is well lit throughout, and the set is particularly impressive. A smart hotel with a terrace overlooking the sea in Act I opens out – with the help of a small army of efficient scenery movers – onto a sumptuous Parisian interior in Acts II and III, with beautifully designed art nouveau decorations and furnishings which, together with well-chosen costumes, give an authentic period feel. Coward's play refuses to get serious, and this production offers us a thoroughly enjoyable evening of comic entertainment. As Elyot himself would say, "Splendid!" Do come and see it!



Andrew Thompson



GET INVOLVED IN LIVE THEATRE!

THE LITTLE THEATRE IN LEICESTER IS RUN **ALMOST ENTIRELY** BY VOLUNTEERS. **PEOPLE LIKE YOU** WHO GET INVOLVED FOR THE **CAMARADERIE, EXCITEMENT** AND **ENJOYMENT** BRINGING **GREAT DRAMA** TO OUR STAGES.

VOLUNTEERS IN PROPS, SET CONSTRUCTION, STAGE MANAGEMENT, LIGHTING, SOUND, COSTUMES, ACTING, DRESSERS, FRONT OF HOUSE, THE OFFICE AND BAR...

If you'd like to find out more we run open evenings most months on a Tuesday evening - our **TUESDAY CONNECTION**. Free to attend, you'll get a tour of the theatre backstage and front of house, a chance to see a show being rehearsed on stage... and if you want to join us as a volunteer, the first year's membership is free!

**IF YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW MORE, EMAIL US AT
TUESDAYCONNECTION@THELITTLETHEATRE.CO.UK**

Cast Notices / Quiz Answers

Handbagged by Moira Buffini

T	Mavis Roper
Q	Elizabeth Spendlove
Mags	Cathy Rackstraw
Liz	Marie Vassilou
Actor 1	John Moulding
Actor 2	Paul Large

Director Russell Hughes is also looking for a Stage Manager and a prompt, so if anyone is interested, please contact him: Russell.Hughes@thelittletheatre.co.uk

A Bunch of Amateurs by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman

Cast

Dorothy Nettle - Leeann Rana
Jefferson Steel - Steve Elliott
Nigel Dewbury - David Lovell
Mary Plunkett - Clare Snow
Denis Dobbins - Freddie Dobrijevic
Lauren Bell - Olivia Morrissey
Jessica Steel - Maisie Ashford Clark
Journalists etc. – Joe Allen and Daniel Peckett

Technical Team

Director - Ruth Cheetham
Set Design - TBC
Costume Design - John Bale
Lighting Design - Alex Crooks
Sound Design - Andrew Northcote
Stage Manager - Nadine Hall
Deputy Stage Manager - Nikki Strickland
Props - Alison Lee and Patsy Keane

Thanks to everyone who auditioned! You made our decision very difficult, but it was truly amazing to see so many people going for parts.

The 'Vague Plots' Quiz | Answers

Here are the answers from last month's quiz! How many did you get right?

1. A man is responsible for the death of his pilot son, lies about it, ruins everyone's life. *All My Sons*
2. A Norwegian widow hounds her son over his lifestyle and tries to prevent him from inheriting anything from his father. *Ghosts*
3. A bunch of people are trapped in the snow. One is a killer. *The Mousetrap*
4. A tale about women who want to end a war. The men don't like their plan. *Lysistrata*
5. A professor tries to turn an uncouth flower girl into a lady. *Pygmalion*
6. A black truck driver and former baseball player struggles to make a living in Pittsburgh. *Fences*
7. A conman toys with the affections of a rich nobleman and his mother in order to get their money. *Tartuffe*
8. A handkerchief proves troublesome for a Venetian general's marriage. *Othello*
9. A married couple fight in front of another married couple. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*
10. An accused criminal will be finding out how he will spend eternity. *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*

Marking the 100th anniversary of the Leicester Drama Society, 1922–2022



On 26th January 1922, the inaugural meeting of the Leicester Drama Society was held. One hundred years later, the Leicester Drama Society continues to stage full seasons of varied drama and provides a focus for amateur theatre in the city from its own Little Theatre premises on Dover Street in the heart of Leicester.

This full colour book looks behind the scenes at the work of the Society over the last forty years... the productions, personalities and problems overcome through the years, including the recent pandemic. It features numerous photographs from the theatre's extensive archive of shows staged over the last forty years, along with a list of all plays staged since the Society was launched.

Members of the Leicester Drama Society can buy *In Our Time* at a discount of 35% off the RRP!

Available from the theatre Box Office or direct from the publishers, The Book Guild Ltd (p+p applies): www.bookguild.co.uk/bookshop. Simply enter code **LDS** at the checkout to buy at the discounted rate online.

ISBN 9781915122315 256 pages full colour landscape £19.95_{RRP}





Romantic
Drama

By Nick Payne

17th–22nd January 2022

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Directed by Jane Durant



This amateur production is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French Ltd, a Concord Theatricals company.

CONSTELLATIONS

