

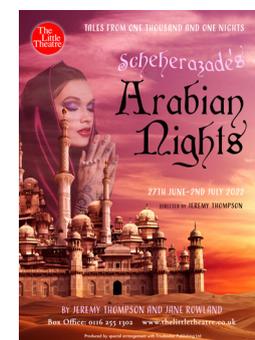
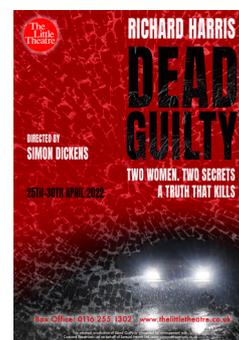
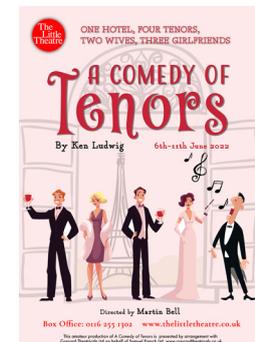
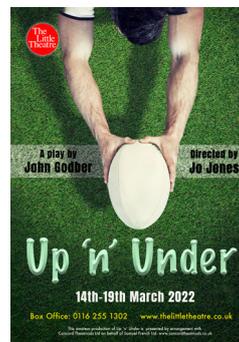
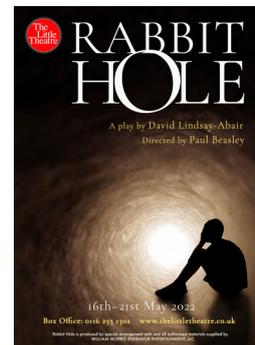
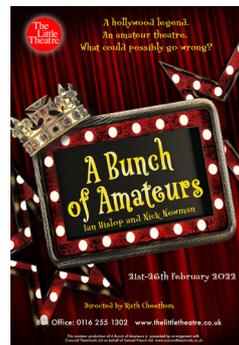
SCENE

The Little Theatre

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
Scheherazade's Arabian Nights	27 June –2 July
LDS Production	Directed by Jeremy Thompson



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Scene

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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.

Editorial

Happy New Year to all theatre members.

IT'S BEHIND YOUUUUUU! Well it is now... last Sunday saw the last in a 24-performance mammoth run for *Cinderella*, a virtual sell-out and acclaimed by all as probably our most successful panto of recent years. Huge congratulations to the cast and crew who made this such a popular show, and to Director and author John Bale who carried it all off in his usual professional style.

But wait... it's not just cast and crew that make the panto work, but all of those who volunteer behind the bar, front of house, in the Kool Kids' Bar and in the box office. The often-overlooked stalwarts of the theatre who give their time behind the scenes to look after our patrons and keep everyone smiling. They all deserve an individual mention, but one in particular is about to be embarrassed... Front of House Coordinator Fran Harris, who cajoles and corales FoH volunteers like a flock of antelope on speed, filling those FoH slots – often at short notice – to ensure that the show *can* go on. Time to put your feet up for a bit now, Fran...?! Please accept this 'virtual' bunch of flowers from all at *Scene*!



Photo credits

Pictures of *Private Lives* published in December's *Scene* were taken by Dave Morris. Our apologies for omitting the credit.

Reviews...

***Cinderella* (December 2021)**

Last Friday saw The Little Theatre proudly present their long-awaited, ever-popular traditional pantomime, this year being the well loved *Cinderella* – the first of the pantomimes to open in Leicester’s Christmas season – and it didn’t disappoint... from the energetic opening to the sparkling walkdown. There was an interesting twist in the production from writer and director John Bale as he set the action in France, wait for it, at the Chateau de Broke, lived in by two spiteful and bitchy sisters with their stepsister Cinderella, all under the malevolent care of the evil Madame Fifi!

The excited atmosphere was palpable from the beginning as youngsters in the audience enjoyed a colouring competition in theatre’s studio, converted into Button’s Bar, and continuing as they entered the main auditorium noisily cheering and ready for action away from the TV or iPads.

A small but multitalented cast ensured the pace never dropped, with the short catchy songs, simple but hilarious sketches, with earplugs needed in the always ridiculous ‘it’s behind you’ bench scene (a John Bale speciality), and the fast-paced ‘Twelve Days of Christmas’, which was so chaotic it was superb. Most of the audience were victims of the dreaded water pistols, me included (thanks Buttons)!

And so to the cast. The ever-reliable Karen Gordon flitted around the stage in true Fairy Godmother style; Rose Bale as convincing as always as the put-upon Cinderella; and Rosie Chalmers and Kat Etoe bouncing slickly off each other as the wicked (but not so ugly) sisters Bella and Donna. The same can be said for Simon Butler and Joe Middleton as Prince Rupert and Dandini, respectively. (My favourite joke came from them; it’s the ‘right toe’ one folks, extremely corny (sorry!).)

This time it was John Bale’s turn to morph from his usual Dame status into the baddie as the evil Madame Fifi and the kids made their vocals heard in deafening style, with their hissing and booing at his every appearance... great stuff. Tim Stokes gave a show-stealing performance as Buttons, and the audience loved him from the off. His one-off dance sequence to the sounds from Alexa was a comical highlight of the show.

Once again, The Little Theatre’s pantomime is a family festive feast with dazzling costumes, effective sets and always the customary mayhem. Pantoland is back with a bang at Dover Street!

Lynette Watson

***Cinderella* (December 2021)**

We all know what we want from a traditional family pantomime (Oh yes we do!) and the Little Theatre’s *Cinderella* has all those ingredients in abundance. From the fascinating curtain that greets us when we walk in, full of cogs and whirling clock hands that remind us that Cinderella must leave the ball by midnight, to the glittering set using the full depth of the theatre space, we are drawn in to a magical world. There is plenty of singing, with an exuberant cast giving us many catchy and easily recognisable numbers to clap along to, and the frequent dance routines from the lively troupe of dancers at the court of Prince Rupert are beautifully choreographed and well performed throughout the show.

Of course it is the Fairy Godmother who has everything under control. Karen Gordon is a calm, serene presence every time she appears in her beautiful dresses, and her clear explanations of what is going to happen as she moves the story

Reviews...

along can leave even the youngest members of the audience in no doubt that she's looking out for Cinders, and that things will work out in the end. Cinderella, beautifully played by Rose Bale, needs all the help she can get when you see what she's up against in her mean and spiteful stepsisters (Bella and Donna), played with gusto by Rosie Chalmers and Kat Etoe, who thrust themselves between their sister and Prince Rupert at every turn and are thoroughly horrible throughout.

The lovelorn Buttons (Tim Stokes) creates a strong rapport with the audience immediately and soon enlists the help of all the boys and girls in the theatre, plus more than a few Mums and Dads, to ensure that the story is able to reach its happy ending. We feel sorry for him that he can't quite bring himself to confess his love for Cinderella and that his love for her goes unrequited but, as this is Pantoland, it doesn't seem to worry him too much and he soon regains his high spirits as he follows Cinders to the Ball, thwarts the evil intentions of the pantomime dame, makes some hilarious local jokes – and a few howlers! and leads the singing from the audience before the grand finale.

Buttons's rival in love is the timid and hesitant Prince Rupert, nicely portrayed by Simon Butler. He's clearly pretty shy around girls and really needs the help of his fixer Dandini (Joe Middleton), who makes sure Rupert meets up with Cinderella, organises the ball and then afterwards a mass slipper fitting programme. But it's all in a day's work for Dandini, who clearly knows how to manage his boss, and who sings and dances his way unruffled through the show.

We soon meet our formidable, glorious, larger-than-life panto dame, (John Bale), wearing a series of colourful outrageous gowns and plumed headdresses that put Ru Paul's Drag Race into the shade. As soon as Ma-Dame Fifi struts onto the stage we see how wicked she really is in her ominous purple gown accompanied by suitably scary music. She has no time for us in the audience – a bunch of losers! – or anyone else in the show, and seems to soak up the boos with greater pleasure each time she comes on. Even with the Fairy Godmother and Buttons on her side, Cinders still falls victim to some pretty dastardly tricks from Ma-dame Fifi, in her desperate bid to get the attention of Prince Rupert for Bella or Donna.

And of course we also get treated to some of the familiar panto routines we've waited over two years for by now. And how we've missed them! I particularly loved the clever scene when Alexa and Siri got drawn into the mix (but no spoilers please)! Is there also a ghost? Buttons didn't think so, but If there is it's probably BEHIND YOU!

This was a very polished performance from the cast, with a charming mix of familiar and spontaneous, supported by a very professional unseen cast off stage who made sure everything ran smoothly. A sumptuous production with beautiful costumes was impeccably lit. A special mention for "Uncle" Paul Timms who provided the music and who at times seemed to be conducting a large unseen orchestra from a small space at the front of the stage. That's the magic of theatre! There really is something for everyone here. When I saw it a full house of young and old were transported into the world of Cinderella and enthralled by it. If you can still find a ticket let the Little Theatre sprinkle a large dose of happiness, fun and laughter over your Christmas this year!



Andrew Thompson

The
Little
Theatre

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**

The Little Theatre, Dover Street, Leicester LE1 6PW 0116 255 1302

Audition Notices

Rabbit Hole

Directed by Paul Beasley

Auditions for *Rabbit Hole* will be held on Tuesday 25th and Thursday 27th January in the Haywood Studio at 7.30pm. This is a beautiful and powerful piece set in modern-day New York State about a family dealing with tragedy, and all roles will give the actors something to really get their teeth into.

The parts are as follows:

Becca: Female. Late Thirties / Early Forties.

Howie: Male. Late Thirties / Early Forties

Izzy: Female. Early Thirties (Becca's sister)

Nat: Female. Mid-Sixties (Becca's Mother)

Jason: Male. Seventeen-ish.

Production Dates are 16th–21st May 22.

Director Paul Beasley encourages anyone to audition, and if you are interested in auditioning, please let him know in advance by dropping an email at worldofbeadle@btinternet.com or by sending a text message or WhatsApp on 07771 747949.

Comedy of Tenors

Directed by Martin Bell

Auditions for *Comedy of Tenors* will be held on Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th February in the Haywood Studio at 7.30pm. Calling all actors who have stamina and can do an American/Italian/Russian accent! We're putting on this breathtaking comedy early in the summer and the following roles are up for grabs:

Saunders – Broadway producer, male, 40-60 years, American accent required.

Max – clumsy, wannabe opera-singer, male, 25-35 years. American accent and singing voice required

Tito – fading opera-singer, male, 40-60. Italian accent and singing voice required

Maria – feisty, long-suffering wife to Tito, female, 40–50, Italian accent required.

Mimi – budding actress, daughter of Tito and Maria, 18-25, female, American accent required.

Carlo – up and coming Italian opera star and ladies man, 20-30, male, Italian accent and singing voice required

Racon – glamorous but fading Russian opera-star, 30-40, female, Russian accent required.

Production Dates are 6th–11th June 22.

Please let Martin know if you are interested in coming along. Telephone: 079 144 03 144 or contact via email martin.bell27@outlook.com If you would like to audition but cannot make it for either of the dates above then please still get in touch. Hope to see you at the auditions! It's going to be a blast.

Scheherazade's Arabian Nights

Directed by Jeremy Thompson

Auditions for *Scheherazade's Arabian Nights* will be held in mid-late February, full details will be posted on our website (www.thelittletheatre.co.uk/auditions/) and will be published in February's Scene. Scripts will be available from the theatre office from mid January onwards, or email me and I can send you a PDF version: jeremy.thompson@thelittletheatre.co.uk. There are parts for male/female from 18 upwards.

Production Dates are 27th June – 2nd July 22.

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

Box Office: 0116 255 1302

Book online: www.thelittletheatre.co.uk



Directed by Jane Durant



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

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