



SCENE

The Newsletter of the Leicester Drama Society

A.G.M.

Sunday 13th March in the auditorium at 7pm

Under our governing document, we must hold an AGM each year, although it proved impossible last year for COVID reasons. The AGM is primarily for the trustees to present the accounts for the previous financial year and for the membership to elect trustees to any vacancies that are available due to retirement or resignation since the last AGM. All members of LDS who are fully paid up on the 16th February 2022 are entitled to attend and vote at the meeting.

However, we couple the AGM – which is a formal occasion with a fixed agenda – with **an informal question and answer session, allowing members to raise any issues they wish to discuss with the trustees and/or membership.** If you wish to discuss anything, it is helpful to give a little notice by phone or email to either me or any other trustee of your choice, so that we can muster any background information that might be useful. This is particularly helpful if financial information is required. We must carry out the formal part of the proceedings with a quorum of members to allow the Society to continue to legally exist. Your theatre desperately needs a new generation of members to get involved in running the Society, to ensure that it keeps going for another 100 years. Several long-standing trustees are not seeking re-election this year, so there is scope for any member to become involved in running the Society moving forward, whether as a trustee or as a member of one of the committees that coordinate the running of the theatre. Please don't wait to be asked to get involved...!

Rob Thirlby, Company Secretary

07973 217795 / rob.thirlby@thelittletheatre.co.uk

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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 ▶ **Vacancy**

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

Honorary Secretary ▶ **Mary Jones**

Trustee for Productions ▶ **John Ghent**

Trustee for Facilities ▶ **Martin Scott**

Trustee for Front of House ▶ **Frances Harris**

Trustee for the Studio ▶ **Russell Hughes**

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: Vacancy

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 Mary Jayne Harding Scott or Dave Morris, 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 Mary Jayne Harding Scott.

Jeremy Thompson

Editorial

Those of you who follow The Little on Facebook will be aware that we are currently advertising for an Assistant Theatre Manager (see also our website: www.thelittletheatre.co.uk/deputy-manager/). The closing date for applications is 20th March. Running the theatre with a reduced staff complement has been a struggle, and although many have stepped up to volunteer in all sorts of roles, the administrative burden has always fallen on a select few.

Our Theatre Manager, Graham Muir, has on more occasions than can be counted worked a full day in the office followed by voluntary shifts on the bar during a show week. That sort of dedication is not sustainable. Despite everyone's best efforts, we are only just about keeping the basics going... there's precious little time to develop the theatre moving forward as we're constantly having to prioritise the immediate.

At its monthly meeting in January, the trustees decided that, although finances are more than tight, there was no option other than to employ an Assistant Manager, not only to take some of the day-to-day administrative and organisational burden off the current staff and volunteers, but to release time that can be spent on the less immediate issues. At a time when we are struggling (along with most theatres) to attract anything like our pre-pandemic audience levels, one of our priorities must be to broaden our audience base and membership so that the theatre can get itself on a far more sound financial footing.

One of the recent initiatives that has been bearing fruit is the reintroduction of our Tuesday Connection. Coordinated by Richard Payton, so far we've held around five sessions on a Tuesday evening prior to an LDS show week for anyone interested in getting involved in the theatre, on or back stage. The response has been really encouraging, with a lot of new members joining the theatre to get involved in one capacity or another.

To all those new members, welcome! And please **don't wait to be asked to do something**... if you want to get involved in a show or behind the scenes, contact Graham at the theatre (Graham.Muir@thelittletheatre.co.uk) and he will try to get you involved as soon as possible in some way.

Cast and Creative Team Notices

***A Comedy of Tenors* Cast and Creative Team**

Directed by Martin Bell

Thank you to all those who came to the auditions. The cast and creative team for this show in early June (6-11th) are confirmed as follows.

CAST

Brian Marshall (Saunders)
Steve Illidge (Tito)
Su Goodacre (Maria)
Simon Butler (Max)
Nikki Favell (Mimi)
Alex Thompson (Carlo)
Laura Brookes (Racon)

CREATIVE TEAM

Director: Martin Bell
Scenic Design: Phil Newman
Costume Design: John Bale
DSM: Alison Levy
Stage Manager: Neil Reece
Lighting Design: Peter Flannery
Sound Design: Martin Bell
Props: Becky Bell
Prompt: Graham Austen

***Scheherezade's Arabian Nights* Cast and Creative Team**

Directed by Jeremy Thompson

Thank you to all those who came for an audition; the cast and creative team are as below. We are still seeking a prompt, if you are interested then please let me know: jeremy.thompson@thelittletheatre.co.uk

CAST

Tanzim Kibria (Scheherezade)
Joe Middleton (Sultan)
Michael Holland (Vizier/Hussan/Captain of the Guard)
Robin Turner (King Al-Mundir/Akil/Fisherman)
Katy Weaver (Jinee 1/Amina)
Sam Cooper (Prince Alee/Jinee 2/Alì Baba)
Stephanie Tangen (Din'yazad/Marjana)
Grace Bennett (Executioner/wedding guest/townfolk)
Ava Hall (Wedding guest/townfolk)

CREATIVE TEAM

Director & Scenic Designer: Jeremy Thompson
Stage Manager: TBD
DSM: Andrew Thompson
Lighting Design: Alex Crooks
Sound Design: Andrew Northcote
Costume Design: John Bale
Props: Jane Rowland
Prompt: Vacancy

LDS 200 CLUB

February

1st prize - £250 Share Number - 87
2nd prize - £100 Share Number - 91
3rd prize - £50 Share Number - 134

Review: A Bunch of Amateurs

Comedy writing duo of Ian Hislop and Nick Newman's *A Bunch of Amateurs* was originally written for the big screen in 2008 and premiered in that same year's Royal Film Performance. It was an instant success, especially with HM the Queen, who asked for a screening of it during Christmas at Sandringham. The stage adaptation wasn't released until several years later.



In a nutshell, the plot revolves around an amateur theatre company called The Stratford Players, who are rehearsing Shakespeare's *King Lear* and desperately want to obtain a famous star to take the lead, in order to save their local theatre from closure. They manage to contact Jefferson Steel, an fading American film star, who is eager to revive his declining career; he agrees to take on the part, believing it to be for the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford itself, only to discover he has been tricked by his agent – arriving in the sleepy village of Stratford St John – resulting in egos, vanity and sparks flying when the professional and amateur theatre worlds collide!

There are always some beautifully drawn characters in



Hislop and Newman's work, and the cast worked hard to inhabit their roles and make them believable; but, as so often with farce, the plot itself determines a certain suspension of disbelief, and they only just about managed to achieve it. At the centre of the action, Jefferson Steel was played by Steve Elliott with the right amount of cynicism and vanity, and his gradual transition from the egotistical star to addressing his personal demons with humility was a delight to watch. He was equally matched by talented Leeann Rana as the company's director, Dorothy, dealing with Jefferson's celeb demands with ease, eventually leading to the possible romance between them. Nigel, a company member, is Jefferson's rival and desperate to play *Lear* himself; he constantly boasts about his acting ability and is one of those annoying and pompous characters we all encounter at some point. As Nigel, the ever-reliable David Lovell delivered a skilful performance, taking the melodrama up to the wire without actually tripping over it... and also giving a masterclass in theatre projection! The rest of the small cast gave strong support, and the interspersing of the scenes with the Shakespearean quotes worked well with the atmospheric lighting against the minimalistic wooden barn set, adding to the structural element of the play.



My main concern, however, was the audibility of some of the actors – when the action was delivered from the back of the set, the dialogue was virtually lost. Hopefully this will be rectified during the run.

Co-writer Nick Newman states the play's theme is about the redemptive power of the theatre – let's hope in this current climate that this theme rings true.

Lynette Watson

Last Word
PRODUCTIONS
PRESENT



Dorothy Reynolds
and Julian Slade's

SALAD DAYS

Fresh out of university, Timothy and Jane have some big decisions to make. What on earth should they do next? They could get married, but how will they make a living?

Timothy's numerous uncles all have their own plans for the couple's future, however, a chance encounter with a magical piano leads to a very different solution. It's not just any old piano though, as whenever it plays, everyone within earshot finds themselves dancing, even against their better judgment.

A heart-warming musical comedy, **Salad Days** combines whimsical humour and memorable music with a cast of 8 actors playing over 40 characters.

Friday 4th March 7:30pm

Saturday 5th March 2:30pm & 7:30pm

Tickets: £15 (no concessions)

GLYN KERSLAKE

*('Phantom' in The Phantom Of The Opera,
Les Mis, Miss Saigon)*

ELAINE GLOVER

*(The Full Monty, Emmerdale,
Footballers' Wives)*

SING

THE GREAT AMERICAN SONGBOOK

HOSTED BY JOHN FLORANCE

(BBC Radio Leicester)



An intimate evening of words & music at the piano. With classics such as 'It's De-lovely', 'Cheek to Cheek', 'Bill' 'Someone To Watch Over Me' & many more....



The Little Theatre
Leicester

FRI 25th MARCH '22

7:30pm

TICKETS £16

CALL OR BOOK ONLINE
www.thelittletheatre.co.uk
Tel: 0116 255 1302





**A play by
John Godber**

**Directed by
Lynn Moore**

Up 'n' Under

14th-19th March 2022

Box Office: 0116 255 1302 www.thelittletheatre.co.uk

This amateur production of *Up 'n' Under* is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. www.concordtheatricals.co.uk