

*The York Realist*  
Dir. Nadine Beasley



MARCH 2023

# SCENE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEICESTER DRAMA SOCIETY

The  
Little  
Theatre

Visit our website for more information: [thelittletheatre.co.uk](http://thelittletheatre.co.uk)





# Editor's Letter

The annual general meeting (AGM) takes place on March 19, and it'd be great to see as many members there as possible. You'll get to hear about what's going on behind the scenes, elect new trustees, and hear about The Little's future plans – plus, it's a great opportunity to get your two-pence in! See you there!

I have a feeling we're looking at another hit success with *Bedroom Farce* playing at The

Little in early March – rehearsals are looking riotous, and I can't wait to see it myself. *The Railway Children* is another one I'm looking forward to as the first LDS-produced musical I will have seen. The *All England One Act Play Festival* is set to make for an interesting week. Each session will feature three plays and genres may or may not include comedy, thriller, historical, dance, or drama, amongst others!

Finally, a big thank you to Mary Jones, who will be stepping down as Honorary Secretary this month after 10 years on the board of trustees and is looking forward to spending more time with her family. Her hard work and dedication to The Little has been deeply valued and appreciated. We're assured though that she and Adam will still be regularly involved. Thank you, Mary.

Kerry

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# The Team

Theatre Manager ▶ **Graham Muir**

Deputy Theatre Manager ▶ **Carolyn Young**

Head of Wardrobe ▶ **John Bale**

Workshop ▶ **Dave Towers**

Maintenance Officer ▶ **Rob Mullins**

Youth Theatre Leader ▶ **Andy Longley-Brown**

Deputy Youth Theatre Leader ▶ **Kate MacIntyre**

## Leicester Drama Society Ltd Board of Trustees

Chairman & Technical Trustee ▶ **Andy Crooks**

Company Secretary ▶ **David Moore**

Honorary Secretary ▶ **Mary Jones**

Treasurer ▶ **Jenny Harding**

Trustee for Facilities ▶ **Martin Scott**

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

Trustee for Marketing & Outreach ▶ **Tom Young**

Trustee for Membership ▶ **Jackie Caunt**

Trustee for Productions ▶ **Joe Middleton**

Trustee for the Studio ▶ **Russell Hughes**

Trustee without specific responsibility  
and minutes secretary ▶ **Simon Dickens**

## Scene

Editor of Scene ▶ **Kerry Smith**

Design of Scene ▶ **Cross Productions**

Contributions to Scene are invited. Our deadline is a week before the end of each month. If you have a story, let us know before then to guarantee that we reserve space for you. Contact us via email on [hello@thelittletheatre.co.uk](mailto:hello@thelittletheatre.co.uk).

# 200 Club Winners

## The winners of February 2023's draw:

1st	057 (£250)
2nd	015 (£100)
3rd	009 (£50)

You can join the 200 Club monthly draws now for a payment of £10. This payment will include you in the two remaining draws for this year (March and April 2023). Your payment will provide valuable support to The Little Theatre and give you an excellent chance of winning a prize of £250, £100 or £50 each month.

Call The Little Theatre Box Office on 0116 255 1302 to join and make your payment.

# Cast Announcement: Bouncers (Remix)

We're delighted to announce the cast for June's production of John Godber's clubland classic, *Bouncers (Remix)*.

**Lucky Eric** – Steve Feeney

**Ralph** – Steve Finlay

**Les** – Steve Elliott

**Judd** – Allan Smith

The play will be on stage June 12-17,  
and directed by Jane Towers.

# Member Profile

## Andy Mear



Andy Mear is a man of several trades within The Little Theatre.

His first experience of theatre was being brought to The Little's pantomimes on New Year's Eve and singing along with the cast to Auld Lang Syne at the end of the show.

A Leicester lad, born and bred, he went to Anstey Martin and Quorn Rawlins schools, then on to college in Derby to study Diagnostic Radiography. He's now a Radiographer at Leicester General Hospital and works a lot in the operating theatres – obviously theatre is in his blood (Ed's Note: not an *official* diagnosis, one hopes).

Andy joined The Little in 1990. This came about because he worked with an amateur actor called Bryan Hughes, who invited him along and introduced him to Adrian Woodward, who was The Little's Head of Lighting at the time. Andy spent approximately 10 years in lighting with Adrian, Martin, Jenny

and Rob.

His first show at The Little was *Under Milk Wood* by Dylan Thomas. During this time, Andy was involved in fit-ups, strikes and operating the lighting board. When an opportunity came along for Andy to shadow Deputy Stage Manager (DSM) Pat Delvalle, he found he particularly enjoyed this, as it allowed him to see the play and watch the actors develop and grow from first rehearsal to last performance.

Feeling he's naturally a very shy person, Andy told me he was made to feel very welcome at The Little from day one, and across all the different teams he's been involved with.

He has a passion for theatre and enjoys the connections and creativity of a team working together, making productions for the entertainment of our audiences. He also believes theatre isn't a luxury but enhances peoples' lives. When not at work or backstage, Andy also enjoys walking, going to dinner with friends, and – of course – going to the theatre. He particularly enjoys plays and productions that include music in them.

With many highlights and stories from over the years, one that Andy imparted to me was when, many years ago, he was operating the lighting during a performance of *The Wizard of Oz*, and the set caught fire. This was caused by a pyrotechnic malfunctioning. The fire was promptly put out by the crew and stage manager, impressing Leicester's Chief Fire Officer who happened to be sitting in the audience with his family!

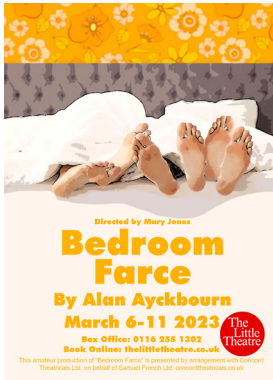
Andy is currently DSM for the upcoming play, *Bedroom Farce*.

Words by Jackie Caunt,  
Trustee for Membership





# What's On This Month



## **Bedroom Farce** By Alan Ayckbourn

**March 6-11** An LDS Production

Directed by Mary Jones

Four couples, three bedrooms, one long night.

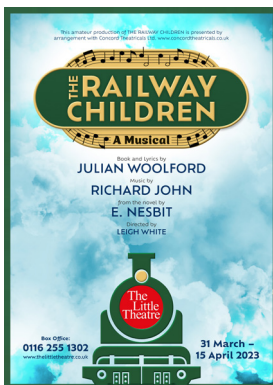
Ernest and Delia consume pilchards to celebrate their wedding anniversary. An incapacitated Nick is bedridden, while his wife, Jan, goes to the housewarming party of Malcolm and Kate. The latter two are enjoying childish pranks – hiding each other's belongings – and attempting a little DIY! Meanwhile, Trevor (the dysfunctional son of Ernest and Delia) and his neurotic wife, Suzannah, manage to cause chaos by bringing their problems to all three bedrooms.

A comic slice of middle-class life in the 1970s, *Bedroom Farce* is one of Ayckbourn's funniest, most fast-paced plays.

## **One Act Play Festival**

**March 16-18**

We'll be hosting the AETF's regional event in March. Held over a few days, each session will feature three plays of 25-55 minutes. Genres may include farce, comedy, thrillers, historical, social messages/situations, dance drama, or many others.



## **The Railway Children: A Musical**

By Julian Woolford and Richard John, based on the novel by Edith Nesbit

**March 31 to April 15** An LDS Production

Directed Leigh White

The much-loved tale of the three Victorian children (Roberta, Peter and Phyllis) and their mother, who are forced to move to the countryside after their father is wrongly imprisoned for espionage.

Mr Perks, the local stationmaster, introduces them to the wonder of the nearby railway. There, they meet an old gentleman, who may be able to help reunite the family.

Brought vividly to life in this musical adaptation, the show keeps the novel's spirit of humour, tension, adventure, and the final triumph of good over evil.

REMINDER

**£10  
TICKETS**

FOR LDS  
MEMBERS

Don't forget that LDS members are entitled to one ticket (per member per show) at the discounted rate of £10 for the five LDS plays in our spring/summer season. These are available to purchase within a month of the production.

### **THE PLAYS ELIGIBLE FOR THIS DISCOUNT ARE:**

**Bedroom Farce** (March 6-11)

**Home, I'm Darling** (May 8-13)

**Bouncers (Remix)** (June 12-17)

**Shakespeare in Love** (July 3-8)

### **ALSO AVAILABLE ON THIS RATE IS:**

**Gypsy** (KW Productions, June 20-24)

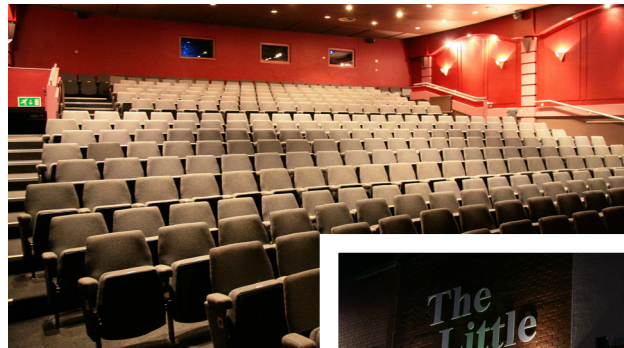
# Connections Report

As I don't have much to report this month, I pondered on what I could write that might be of some interest. Usually I write about what's happened at a recent Connections evening, so I decided to look at the word 'Connection'. Of course, everyone knows what it means because we connect in many ways throughout our lives; relationships, friendships, colleagues, etc.

Even manmade things such as trains have connecting parts; it wouldn't be much use just having an engine without any carriages – no-one would get anywhere. I wonder why I picked trains as an example... *hmmm!* Might be because of our musical production of *The Railway Children* coming to The Little, March 31 through April 15. I'm really looking forward to it. Just a tiny advert in my musings...

Back to the subject. The theatre is all about connection; to get a play on stage, first and foremost we need people to maintain the theatre building, then actors, directors, FOH, office staff – all connecting with each other and no matter how small the part we each play in getting a production together, everyone is important. Not to mention our audience! If we make them happy and keep them invested then we've made the greatest connection of all.

I started volunteering at the theatre when I retired; I like to be busy and suddenly found myself with time on my hands. I've always loved theatre and – at one time – belonged to a theatre group called Mosnell Players. I loved being a part of it and did act in some plays, although I'm not that good at acting. I've often found it funny when we start divi-ing up who would do what on a



production, some of the older ladies would ask what night my dad was coming, and they said they'd do FOH that night!

I must admit, my dad was a very handsome man!

At The Little, my initial connection came when I started selling tickets in the office, and then added to my duties doing front of house, as I am to this day.

I would so like to hear of how you connected to The Little Theatre, and your experiences and memories within our building and community. I think it would be fun or perhaps even a little poignant, and something I could share in a future issue.

If you have memories to share, you can contact Jackie on [jackie.caunt@thelittletheatre.co.uk](mailto:jackie.caunt@thelittletheatre.co.uk).

*Jackie Caunt, Trustee for Membership*



## Vacancies

**We are currently looking for additional volunteers to help the theatre in the following ways:**

### Reviewers

We'd like to expand our team of in-house reviewers. While we already have some writers willing to attend our shows and write up a review, those people are unable to attend every show.

You'd be required to attend a show on opening night (ticket provided), give it a fair appraisal, and have the review ready for publication the following day.

A writing sample – preferably in the form of a theatre review – will be required for consideration.

If interested, please email [tom.young@thelittletheatre.co.uk](mailto:tom.young@thelittletheatre.co.uk) with your writing sample (300 words) attached.

### Workshop Leaders

We're interested in bringing in new leaders for our Thursday Night Acting workshop.

This could be one person, or it could be a team of people offering six week courses, for example. We're open to offers.

The acting workshop offers members a chance to get involved and become an active part of the community, as well as develop their performance skills.

If you have experience of leading an acting workshop – or a related, relevant skill set that you'd like to share – please contact [joe.middleton@thelittletheatre.co.uk](mailto:joe.middleton@thelittletheatre.co.uk).



# AGM

By now, you should have all received the invitation and notice of the Annual General Meeting. It will be held in the main auditorium at 7pm on Sunday, March 19, 2023.

As you will see, there are five trustee posts available for election:

- Honorary Secretary Elect (Currently held by Mary Jones)
- Technical Trustee (Currently held by Andy Crooks)
- Front of House Trustee (Currently held by Fran Harris)
- Outreach Trustee (Currently held by Tom Young)
- Trustee for the Studio (Currently held by Russell Hughes)

Please read the role descriptions of each of these positions in the notice document that was emailed out to all members. If you want to know more about these positions and are considering a nomination, the best approach is to get in touch with the current trustee in each role.

If you wish to put yourself forward, I need to receive your signed trustee nomination form by noon on Saturday, March 4, at the latest. Please include a photo of yourself and no more than 200 words on why you want to be considered for election, along with your relevant background experience and interests.

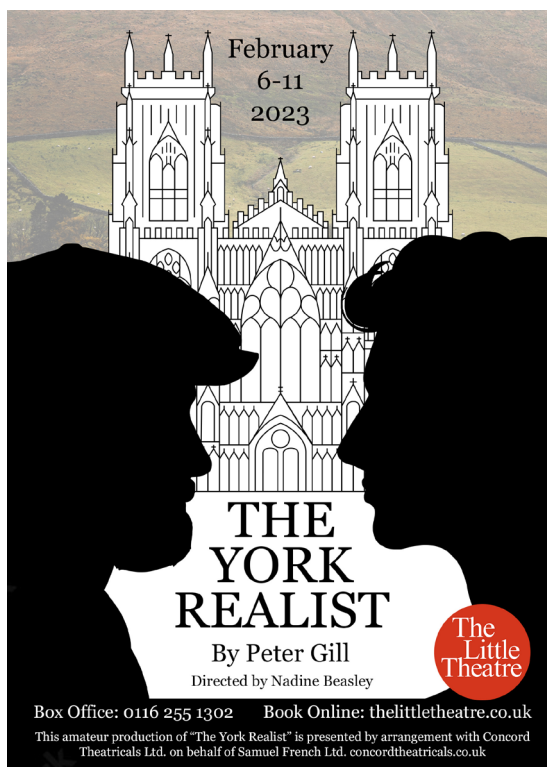
The meeting itself will open with the formal business of the AGM (receiving the trustees' report and financial statements as well as the auditor re-appointment), followed by a less formal session to discuss anything you wish to know about the society and theatre.

I will be sending out the report, financial statements, and proxy forms approximately seven days before the AGM. If you cannot attend the AGM and still wish to vote, please complete the proxy form, and get that to me by 11am on Sunday, March 19.

Hope to see you at our AGM!  
*David Moore, Company Secretary*

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## Review: The York Realist



**February 6-11**

**Directed by Nadine Beasley**

I got to see *The York Realist* on the Friday night, as I helped out with FOH and stewarding. I have to confess; I hadn't booked to see this play because I didn't think it would appeal to me. How wrong I was! I really got lost in it (not ideal when stewarding!).

I thought the set was amazing, and I got a bit fixated on the kettle. The acting really drew me in and I sensed this wasn't going to end happily. The attraction between George (John Moulding) and John (Joe Allen) was sensitively done, but they were so different and set in their ways that it was never going to work. Even a few years later, when homosexuality was legalised, I doubt it would have been accepted in rural Yorkshire.

I really enjoyed all the characters in this production, each going about their everyday lives, mostly worrying about 15-year old Jack (Joshua Thompson) which kept the attention away from George and John. A small part of me feels that, despite her attraction to George, Doreen (Natalie Tebbutt) knew the truth!

A lesson learnt for me: don't judge a book by its cover.  
*Words by Jackie Caunt*

# Audition Notice

## Shakespeare in Love

By Marc Norman, Tom Stoppard and Lee Hall

**Audition Date/Time:** Saturday, 18 March, 2023

**10am until 2pm (latest)**

**Production Dates:** 3-8 July, 2023

**Director:** Steve Illidge

**Location:** 52 Down, The Little Theatre, Dover Street, Leicester

**Contact Info:** 07952 565 038 / 0116 230 1586

or s\_illidge@sky.com / 079525 65038 / 0116 230 1586

**Description:** Penniless and indebted to two theatrical producers, young playwright Will Shakespeare is tormented by writer's block until he finds his muse in the beautiful Viola de Lesseps.

Viola, secretly longing to be an actor, disguises herself as a man and joins the London theatre group, who are to perform Will's new play. A passionate love affair ensues between them, but then cracks begin to emerge. Viola discovers that Will has a wife in Stratford and both discover that Viola's father has promised her to the obnoxious nobleman, Lord Wessex.

Will and Viola's secret love becomes the basis of the very play that Will is writing: Romeo and Juliet. With opening night and Viola's wedding day fast approaching, the plot races towards a parallel conclusion.

This is a wonderful play version of the highly successful 1998 Oscar-winning film starring, amongst others, Joseph Fiennes, Gwyneth Paltrow, Judi Dench and Colin Firth. The plot of the play, penned by Lee Hall, is similar to the film, but this really is a celebration of all things theatre, and the works of William Shakespeare in particular. Although the characters of Will and Viola are very much at the centre of the action, this is very much an ensemble piece. In addition to playing some wonderfully drawn comic characters, you will have the opportunity to sing, dance and perform some of the finest scenes from Romeo and Juliet. Also, as there are dozens of named characters, I would ideally like a large group of both male and female players to participate, and I fully expect that there will be a great opportunity for the smaller parts to be doubled or even tripled up – thus testing your acting mettle! When I first saw this play performed in London, I found it to be very funny, but also incredibly moving. I plan a joyful, fast-paced production with a modern twist. If you would like to audition, please do contact me asap and I will let you have details of the audition pieces for each character and proposed arrangements for the auditions themselves and the rehearsal period. Unfortunately, the cast is very male-heavy, but I shall open up certain parts to our female membership, where I can sensibly do so. Thank you very much for your interest. - Steve Illidge

### Characters:

**Will Shakespeare** – poet and playwright

**Viola de Lesseps/Thomas Kent** – a young noblewoman

**Kit Marlowe** – playwright and Will's friend

**Lord Wessex** – obnoxious nobleman, betrothed to Viola

**Nurse** – Viola's loyal servant

**Henslowe** – owner/manager of Rose Theatre

**Fennyman** – moneylender/gangster

**Lambert and Frees** – Fennyman's stooges

**Edmund Tilney** – officious Lord Chamberlain

**Ned Alleyn** – OTT Actor, plays Mercutio in R&J

**Richard Burbage** – lead actor of the Chamberlain's men

**Sir Robert de Lesseps** – Viola's father

**OR Lady Roberta de Lesseps** – Viola's mother

**John Webster** – bloodthirsty child

### M/F

### Age

M	18-35
F	18-35
M	30-45
M	30-45
F	40+
M	40+
M	40+
M/F	Any age
M	40+
M	30+
M	30+
M	40+
F	40+
M	11-16

If you intend to audition, please can you let me know no later than **4pm on Saturday, 4 March 2023**. If you cannot make the audition date but would like to audition early, I will of course do my best to accommodate.



# Recent Productions

## The York Realist

February saw our production of *The York Realist* on the main stage, directed by Nadine Beasley. An intimate drama, it featured outstanding performances by the whole cast, with a special mention to John Moulding's performance at the centre of the story.



**"Went tonight and it was absolutely amazing; well done everyone for a lovely evening. A must-see play, you will not be disappointed."**



**"A really moving play with fantastic performances by all of the cast but a special mention to John Moulding (George) who was outstanding."**



**"Another great evening at The Little Theatre. Such an atmospheric set, really enhanced by the choice of background music. Felt like I've spent the whole evening in York! Wonderfully cast and beautifully performed – thank you! We're so lucky to have this local theatre."**





# In The Spotlight

**Name:** Diani Gatenby Davies

**Age:** 32

**Profession:** Business Operations Manager at the University of Leicester (like a proper adult innit)

**Upcoming production:** Bedroom Farce

**Noteworthy:** I can almost do the splits; directed LDS's production of *The Shape of Things* in October 2022.

## What was the first theatre show you saw?

Blimey. The first one I properly remember was *The Winter's Tale* by Shakespeare. I can't tell you where it was or how old I was – definitely mid-teens – but I remember thinking, 'This is a bit good isn't it. Maybe I'd like to give theatre a go'.

## What was the first play/musical you were in?

I was in a production of *Jesus Christ Superstar* when I was 16. It was at boarding school, so they had plenty of money to make it far more elaborate than was entirely necessary. I was encouraged to audition by the choirmaster (could I sound more pretentious right now?) who was directing it. My singing/dancing/acting skills left much to be desired, but I did snag the prestigious role of "ensemble". The choreographer insisted on putting me front and centre for most of the dances and I remember thinking at the time, 'Wow, I feel like a (*Jesus Christ Super*) star' (see what I did there?). Then I looked back at photos and thought, 'I look like I had absolutely no idea what I was doing'.

## What's your favourite role you've played to date (and why)?

I really enjoyed playing Valerie in *The Weir*. It was a great challenge to master an Irish accent and ten minute monologue. I also thoroughly enjoyed playing Elvira in *Blithe Spirit* because director John Bale put me in the most fabulous gown, and I liked being spoOoOoky (even if I was extraordinarily unwell in the days preceding opening night and very nearly fainted during the first performance).

## What's your dream role that you're yet to play (and why)?

I can't sing or dance to save my life, but how much fun would it be to play Velma Kelly in *Chicago*?

## What's the best theatre show you've ever seen?

*La Belle Sauvage* at the Bridge Theatre in London was wonderful. They did a fantastic job of fleshing out the world I recognised and loved from *His Dark Materials* (useless Diani fact: if I was ever on *Mastermind*, *His Dark Materials* would definitely be my special subject and I would absolutely crush the competition). The daemons were represented via puppets that looked like

beautifully crafted origami with a light that glowed inside the body, skilfully manoeuvred around the stage with such lifelike movement, I almost forgot they weren't real. It honestly took my breath away. That, to me, is how theatre is meant to make you feel.

## What's your favourite thing about The Little Theatre?

The best thing about my time at The Little Theatre has been the friendships I've made. It can be really challenging as an adult to make new friends. Doing shows makes it easy to meet people, particularly people who are like-minded that I just click with. I also feel really lucky to have been given the opportunity to be involved in so many facets of the theatre – I've acted, been a DSM, have helped out backstage for the Panto, and prompted and directed a few shows.

## Tell us about your upcoming production!

*Bedroom Farce* is a comedy about relationships and their intricacies. It's absurd, confusing, hilarious and sometimes a little bit sweet. We've had great fun rehearsing and I think we've all got amazing chemistry that brings another level to our performances.



# At a glance

## What's on this season

### MARCH



#### Bedroom Farce

March 6-11

#### The Railway Children: A Musical

March 31-April 15



### APRIL



#### Anything Goes

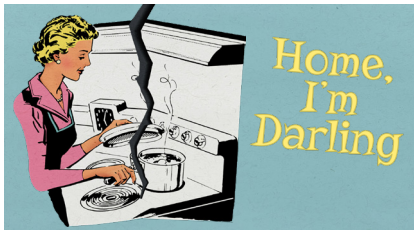
April 18-22

#### James and the Giant Peach

April 28-29



### MAY



#### Home, I'm Darling

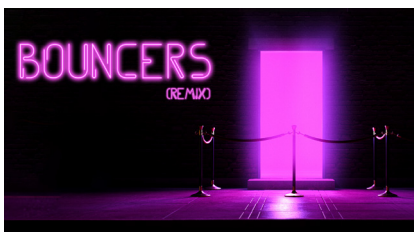
May 8-13

#### Ghost

May 16-20



### JUNE

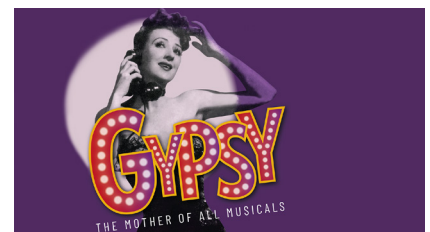


#### Bouncers (Remix)

June 12-17

#### Gypsy

June 20-24



### JULY



#### Shakespeare in Love

July 3-8

#### Celebratory Centenary Old Time Music Hall

July 21-22





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