

Oxfordshire Drama Network



Newsletter

OCTOBER 2023

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

There are lots of events for you to see this Autumn season.

Banbury Cross Players are also hosting a Directing workshop day, so many thanks to them. We hope it is useful to those who attend.

We also have some tips for directing youngsters from Pioneer.

Also preliminary details of our Winter Festival – so if you're doing a panto or a festive play, then enter it into our Festival, entry forms will be around soon!

Mike Davies.



CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Hi Everyone

Hope you all enjoyed your summer – there is a nip in the air and a whiff of silliness which can only mean one thing ...Panto season is upon us.

I can see from the Facebook page that rehearsals are in full swing for many groups, and I look forward to seeing many of them over the coming months. We will be announcing details of our Winter Festival in the coming weeks so keep your eyes peeled.



The National Festival Circuit has just kicked off with the Cambridge Festival of Drama, and Woking Drama Festival starts this Thursday (5th) and runs through until the Saturday 14th – Woking is always a great festival to go along to not least because the Rhoda McGaw Theatre is housed in a very large shopping centre with loads of very nice restaurants close by, so makes a great day out! The quality of plays is always extremely high so definitely worth a trip – check out their website for more details <https://www.wokingdramafestival.co.uk>.

I was pleased to hear that the Guild of Drama Adjudicators are offering their bursaries for Youth Festival Entries again this year and if anyone is thinking about producing a youth festival play and needs help covering the costs then please do go to the GoDA website and complete the form. <https://www.godauk.org>

Best wishes

Karen Carey (Chair)

WHAT'S ON DIARY (details inside)

OCTOBER

18-21	Henley Players	A Bunch of Amateurs
18-21	Sinodun Players	The Welkin
19-21	Compton Players	The Ghosts of Halfway House
24-28	Abingdon Operatic	Chitty Chitty Bang Bang
24-29	Oxford Theatre Guild	Constellations
25-28	Banbury Operatic Society	Kinky Boots
26-28	Henley A.O.D.S.	Death and the Maiden
26-28	Witney Dramatic	Evening of Horror & Comedy

NOVEMBER

9-11	Faringdon Dramatic Society	Act Naturally
11,12,18,19	Jigsaw Stage Prdns	A Night at the Musicals
15-18	Goring Gap Players	'Gaslight'
17-18	The Stonesfield Players	Two, one-act plays
23-25	Kingston Bagpuize D.G.	Cinderella
23-25	The Wychwood Players	Flare Path
29-2Dec	Bartholomew Players	Silver Lining
29-2Dec	St Peter's Plyrs	Goldilocks & the Three Bears
30-2Dec	Chiltern Players	3 plays by David Tristram.
30-2Dec	Dorchester A.D.S.	Goldilocks and the 3 Bears

DECEMBER

8,9 Drayton Plyrs **Away with the Fairies at Christmas**

JANUARY

11-14, 17-20 Abingdon Drama Club **Peter Pan**

Email: info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org

Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/1324585987569767

Instagram: www.instagram.com/oxfordshiredramanetwork

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Directing Workshop

Saturday 21st October 2023

from 10.00am to 4.00pm.

The Cornhill Centre,
Banbury

(located behind J.T.Davies
pub, off the market square)

Quote 'I think to be a good Director you have to create the world of the play and make sure everyone (and the creative team) lives there with you.' (Richard Eyre)



The workshop will be run by Tristan Pate (see tristanjackson-pate.co.uk), a professional Actor & Director and it is intended to introduce people to planning and executing the Director's role. Covering such areas as:-

- a. Discussing and learning about rehearsal techniques.
- b. Script Analysis.
- c. The Design and Technical aspects of a Production.
- d. Creating a clear rehearsal structure.
- e. If you have an area of Directing you feel that you benefit from with some help, please let me know and I will pass it on to Tristan & he will try to incorporate it into the day.

Don't think you may be at a disadvantage in relation to others or out of your depth in relation to the subject matter, you won't be! Please come along.

The maximum number of participants is 20.

Assuming 20 people apply the cost per head will be £15.00 (£14.00 fee and £1.00 towards tea/coffee and biscuits).

A packed lunch will be needed.

The Centre will be open from 9.30am for tea and coffee and the workshop will start promptly at 10.00am.

Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Please contact me on:-
terrygallager1943@gmail.com
or 01295 710875 if you are interested in booking a place, by 18th October latest.

I will follow up directly to you with Centre location and payment details.

Terry Gallager (Banbury Cross Players)

New Look National Drama Festival

REVIEW by Sue Doherty (G.O.D.A.)

48th British National Drama Festival
The Albany Theatre Coventry
Thursday 20th – Sunday 23rd July 2023

This festival took on a new format this year, and what a success it proved to be! Instead of running for a week it was condensed into eight sessions, with fifteen selected groups taking part, representing England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Gibraltar and Bonn.

The adjudicator faced with this challenging task was the informative and entertaining Chris Baglin. Each session attracted good audience numbers.

Unfortunately, due to a family event I could not attend the opening session on Thursday July 20th. "Happy Days" by Samuel Beckett was performed by Newpoint Players. This was the only short full length play to be selected for the festival. Feedback both from the audience and Chris described the production as "stunning" both from the performance and setting perspective.

We left Liverpool on the Friday morning, giving us what we thought would be ample time to arrive at The Albany Theatre for the matinee performance. Torrential rain, roadworks and numerous holdups made the journey a lot longer. We were not concerned when approaching Coventry, with little time to spare, as we have attended the festival before and knew the way to the theatre. Only to be confronted with the dreaded diversion sign! With literally minutes to spare we screeched into a parking bay at the Premier Inn and landed in our seats as the lights went down.

The first play up was "Beside The Seaside, Beside The Sea" a self-penned play by Jim Newcombe, performed by Off Centre Theatre Monmouth. The story follows the courtship and marriage of Helen and David. The two actors showed the romance of the early days of their relationship beautifully, and then the disillusionment with their marriage gradually causing them to drift apart. This was cleverly symbolised by the simple positioning and movement of two chairs. The scene at the seaside where their child is tragically drowned was powerful and heart rending.

Waterbeach Theatre Company followed with their performance "One Night in Toledo" another self-penned play, written by Mark Easterfield. The very effective set transported us to sunny Spain, set on a hotel terrace balcony enhanced by appropriate lighting and props. Two women, Leanna, played by Christine Easterfield and Penny, played by Wendy Croft meet. As they chat over a bottle of wine an uncomfortable history emerges. The bond which gradually grew between the two characters created an excellent build up to the shocking revelation of domestic abuse and rape.

In between sessions the Premier Inn proved to be a hive of activity, with several groups checking in for the



festival and Bev Jenkins. What happened next was one of the most moving and endearing moments of the weekend. The Gibraltar group arrived and one of the youngest members of the team spotted Bev. He ran towards her and proceeded to give her the warmest embrace and said "you are my best adjudicator ever I can't believe you are here!". For those who don't know Bev adjudicated the Gibraltar festival this year.

The evening session opened with "Metamorphosis" by Steven Berkoff performed by Woking College. I have taught this text to A level groups and seen many live professional and amateur productions, so was eager to see their interpretation. The stage presentation could not be faulted, the monochrome effect of the cavernous black stage contrasting with the stark white bed with subtle shades of grey and brown created powerful images. The whole ensemble displayed superb understanding of the text and the performance techniques of Berkoff. At one point Gregor played by William Bazzo delivered lines hanging upside down, suspended from the bedframe by his ankles! One of the best productions of this challenging play I have seen.



This was followed by "Anyone Can Dance" by Sean Baker, performed by **Kingston Bagpuize Drama Group**. Another two hander which looks at the relationship of Joe and Samantha, who have been together for six months. This was a lovely play to watch, which combined humour and despair. Set in a bedroom the couple talk about moments in their past, and we are transported back to different key eras in their lives. We were left to think about the idea of "what is meant to be"

The evening ended with "Bookends" by Scott Perry performed by New Kinver Players.

This performance captured the soullessness of old age beautifully, creating both humour and poignancy for the audience, set in a park Ron and Bill meet up after three weeks: Bill has been in Scarborough reliving his honeymoon and Ron, having escaped from his old people's home, has been living it up on the ferry to Amsterdam. Too often we see plays set in a park with a bench, with little creativity and unimaginative use of the stage. This was not the case with this production. The projection of autumnal tones of trees and foliage beautifully symbolised the late autumn years of the two characters, and the performance space was well used throughout.

Two Studio Spotlights were held on Saturday morning. The first session The Self-Penned Play kicked off with a 40 minute script in hand performance of "Even Numbers" by Tony Domaille: the winner of the Derek Jacobi Playwriting Award and the Geoffrey Whitworth Trophy for Best original script.

It was interesting for The NDFA's Ian Thomas and me to watch this, as we had also seen a different cast deliver this at The British Final in Belfast, proving a script can be interpreted in different ways. This was followed by a discussion led by Tony and myself. The self-penned play was looked at from a writing and adjudicating point of view and the pitfalls which can be avoided. The audience were very responsive and complimentary.

The second session Getting Under The Skin of The GODA Marking System was delivered by myself and repeated the following morning. I must admit I was apprehensive; would it be of interest, and would I have an audience? Fortunately, my doubts were unfounded and both sessions were very well attended by audience members prior to the afternoon shows, directors and performers and Bev Jenkins! (No pressure there) Feedback was very complimentary, and discussions continued later after the performances. It is important as a professional body we are seen to be transparent, and I feel this was an example which had a positive outcome.

"The Pitman Painters" by Lee Hall, performed by Durham Drama Society was the first performance of the Saturday matinee session. To hear the lovely Northumbrian dialect made me feel nostalgic, especially when my childhood home Jesmond was mentioned. The use of projection of the original paintings was highly effective, as an audience we could appreciate the life above and below ground of the mining communities. The humour was captured, and a highlight was the individual reactions to the female model for the life drawing classes.

This was followed by "For the Sake of the Cobblestone Street that Takes Me to You" a self-penned play by Sepideh Tafazzoli performed by Bonn University Shakespeare Company. The plot is inspired by the recent social movement in Iran called "Woman Life, Freedom" A young woman, Azar, tries to appeal to the two judicial authorities of Safety and Liberty to save her country from the threat of civil war. The interaction of the three characters could not be faulted in this intense piece of theatre. The simple staging succeeded in creating some effective images emphasising the status of the characters.

The final production of this session was "Signed, Me" self-penned by Hannah Mifsud and Christian Santos, performed by GAMP (Gibraltar Academy of Music and Performing Arts) This was a story about love, loss, and friendship beautifully narrated by the main character Adam. We embark on his journey with his friend Amy, through childhood, teenage years and beyond. The young actors who played Young Amy and Young Adam were enthralling in their naturalistic performances. The roles were then taken over by two older performers to depict their teenage years. What was evident here was the detailed direction which made us believe we were

watching the same characters in later life - subtle little mannerisms and motifs which repeated themselves. The set was simple but captivating, stark white cut outs of lavender bushes off set with a white bench and blocks. As an audience we laughed and cried as we followed Adam on his journey to adulthood. This was an example of excellent ensemble work from a company with impressive youth actors working alongside adults.

The penultimate session in the evening started with "The Medici Stars" self-penned by David Sear performed by The Combined Actors of Cambridge. A true story about how lives were transformed by Galileo's discovery of moons round Jupiter, which challenged the foundations of Christian views of the Creation. Any historical play must show evidence of detailed research, and this was clearly reflected in this production. The action takes place in Rome over 22 years and shows how two friends Galileo and Barberini become bitter enemies. The stage presentation, especially the authentic costumes, combined with strong performances proved to make this an interesting and informative experience for the audience.



In complete contrast **Didcot Phoenix Drama Group** followed with "Virtual Reality" by Alan Arkin. We were treated to an absurdist two hander about on-upmanship. Two strangers in a warehouse planning a delivery of unknown goods. During a dry run they unpack virtual boxes with mysterious contents in preparation for the arrival of the real thing. The lines were delivered with wit, excellent timing, and physicality. The two actors played the farce with conviction and as result created great comedy for the audience.

The evening finished with "a Sudden, Violent Outburst of Rain" by Sami Ibrahim performed by TACT. It is described as "A poetic fable of an impenetrable immigration system that mirrors our own". This was a production which showed ensemble acting at its best, a combination of strong individual performances and chorus. Every aspect of stage presentation was imaginative and executed with the utmost precision. The plight of migrants hit home through the shifting visuality. The final image of Lilli's shoes left on the stage created a lasting haunting image for the audience.

Sunday afternoon began with "The Last Post" self-penned by Connor Vincent performed by St Christopher School. A group of clashing personalities find themselves locked in their local Wetherspoons during the zombie apocalypse. It was inspiring to see a large young company performing with such enthusiasm and evidence of strong teamwork. This was an amusing production which reminded us of lockdown rules in an absurdist way. The language was very explicit and did somewhat become very repetitive at times.

The final performance of the festival was "Two" by Jim Cartwright performed by Lane End Players. This was a highly impressive performance by the two actors. An example of multi role playing at its best. The superb use of contrasting vocal and physical skills made every single character convincing, creating moments of humour and sadness for the audience.

I did not envy Chris Baglin's task in making his decisions for the various awards. His adjudications throughout had been concise and fair. I was intrigued by his use of postcards to deliver his comments. Swiftly they were moved from one pocket to another, how did he keep them in order? This proves the point, that as adjudicators we all have our own methods and to see each other in action is so valuable.

The Awards were as follows:-

Michael Lees Award for Best Actor - Treasa Davey for Winnie in "Happy Days" Newpoint Players

Amateur Stage Award for Outstanding Festival Contribution - GAMPS Gibraltar

Sydney Fisher Award for Best Team Backstage - GAMPS Gibraltar

John Scowen Award for Best Comedy Moment- "Virtual Reality" **Didcot Phoenix Drama Group**



Dave Willets presenting the Award

NDFa Best Youth Play "Metamorphosis"- Woking College

Derek Palmer Award for Best Youth Actor- William Bazzo for Gregor in "Metamorphosis"

Mary Blakeman Award for Best Full-Length Play- "Happy Days" Newpoint Players

NDFa Award for One Act Play Runner Up- "Metamorphosis" Woking College

Irving Trophy for Best One Act Play- "A Sudden, Violent Outburst of Rain" TACT

This was an inspiring festival and a reflection of the dedication and commitment of the NDFa Council and the determination of Rod Chaytor and Ruth Cattell to achieve the NDFa objective "To encourage as many groups and audience members as possible to participate in-and enjoy-amateur theatre". Watch a short highlights film here: <https://youtu.be/8pABV02Bsis>

Directing Student Actors

By Edith Weiss

From www.pioneerdrama.com

Directing is hard. Directing students is harder. Hopefully following these “ten commandments” will make your job a little easier!



I. Thou shalt remember that you are the boss.

In the theatre, the director sets the tone for both the rehearsals and the performances. It is up to you to create an atmosphere where not only are you respected, but all the actors respect each other as well. To help this happen, only you should give notes. Actors should not critique each other, ever. You should have the final say on what works and what doesn't; after all, when someone's onstage, they have no idea what the whole picture looks like. So while being open to ideas from the actors, learn how to say “no” in constructive ways. For example, “That's a great idea, but it won't work because it steals focus from the main action.” Always give credit to those who are thinking and trying.

II. Thou shalt create a safe environment for actors to take risks.

Without breaking Commandment One, you can still let students know that you value their input and be encouraging of actors trying things for their own characters. If they want to change your blocking, let them try it their way and then make the decision on which way works best. If you have a difficult actor who still challenges your final decision - “My character wouldn't do that,” or “Why would I walk over there?” - evoke Commandment One and use the tried and true, “Because I said so.”

III. Thou shalt let your student actors know what they are doing right.

Laugh when something's funny, they need to hear it! If a rehearsal is going so badly that a good note doesn't seem possible, have them stop and start over. Point out what's missing, such as energy level or focus, in a constructive way so they can do better.

IV. Thou shalt not let an actor feel ignored.

In the space of a couple of rehearsals, everyone in the cast should get a handwritten note from you. This does not have to be burdensome. Even something simple like, “I like that” or, “Good job” goes a long way. An ignored actor, even if they're doing well and know it, feels superfluous and stops giving their all.

V. Thou shalt teach to hold for laughs.

Because of nerves and inexperience, almost all student actors don't know how to stop and wait for the laughter to die down while staying in character. An audience will stop laughing if they see the actors aren't holding. Then the cast gets panicky because they aren't getting any laughs, and you see how this cycle goes. So teach your cast to anticipate laughter and plan for it. Arrange for a small audience (even a couple of people are better than none) before the first performance to teach the actors to listen and hold for laughs while staying focused and in character onstage.

VI. Thou shalt not make actors do anything that embarrasses them.

If you have a kiss that's vital to a scene, check while you're casting which actors are comfortable with it. If no one is okay with it, find ways to work around it - bring on the next actor early or block them so they're behind something and it just looks like they're kissing! Remember too that actors loosen up during the course of rehearsals, and what seems impossible for them on the first day won't seem so a month later. If they are resistant to the end, and you make them do it anyway, chances are it won't work onstage because of their self-consciousness and embarrassment.

VII. Thou shalt emphasize the importance of the actors' voices.

Students need to be taught to enunciate and to project to the back of the room. Vocal warm-ups are a good idea. I've also found it effective to have them talk over loud music while they are rehearsing. Student actors often need to be reminded of the importance of diction, not talking too fast, and not slipping into the teenage “up speak” where every line sounds like a sentence. It's hard, but you have to listen to them as if you don't know the lines. If you have any problems understanding them, think how hard it will be for the audience!

VIII. Thou shalt teach actors to stay in character no matter what.

Forgetting a line is the most common place for student actors to slip out of character. Don't let them say “I'm sorry” if they goof up or can't remember a line in rehearsal. Just have them call “line,” while staying in character. It saves a lot of time and keeps the rehearsal moving. Mistakes with wrong or missed lines will inevitably happen in the performance, but for the most part you shouldn't criticize unless it truly was detrimental to the show. If so, add a rehearsal. Undermining an actor's confidence is not the way to go.

IX. Thou shalt enforce the necessity for silence backstage.

The backstage area should be completely quiet during a rehearsal or a performance. When the actor is not onstage, they must respect the actors who are onstage. This means no running around backstage, no talking on phones. If actors are not off book, they should be studying lines. If an actor has a small part with lots of downtime between scenes, give them things to do - set moving, helping with a costume change, making sound effects, etc. If there is nothing for an actor to do, then they should be watching the rehearsal or performance and learning the discipline of being quiet. Not easy for young people, but essential in the theatre.

X. Thou shalt demand timeliness.

Actors must not be late. If your students are too young to drive, then they are usually not in control of what time they arrive. If this is the case, don't punish or embarrass them if the parents are the ones at fault. But one person being late wastes everyone's time - yours, the cast's and the crew's. At the very least, teach them to call if they're going to be late so you can rehearse around them instead of waiting for them. If it comes to having to call the parents to emphasize the importance of being on time, do it. You won't regret it, I promise.

AUDITIONS

ABINGDON DRAMA CLUB AUDITIONS for **Peter Pan**

adapted from the novel by J.M Barrie

Here are the dates for casting our winter show:-

Thursday 5th October

Wednesday 11th October

7:30pm at the ADC Clubhouse

6 Marcham Road, Abingdon, OX14 1AA

All are welcome

You do not need to be a club member to attend castings. Please come along to a casting if you are interested in working backstage.

Performance dates are 11-14 & 17-20 Jan evenings at 7.30 with matinees on Sats & Sun at 2.30.

AMEGOS THEATRE

Come and get involved with AmEgos next production

THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME

the stunning musical from Menken and Schwartz,

What makes a monster and what makes a man?

This thrilling musical shows us Quasimodo's journey into 1482 Paris. A new, darker, more adult and highly theatrical version, inspired by and incorporating original text from the novel and expanding the Disney film's beloved score. Showcasing themes such as faith, power, discrimination, isolation, and sacrifice, The Hunchback of Notre Dame offers a powerful message of acceptance.

We very much welcome new performers,
so make a note of the dates -

Intro Session Sunday 26th November

Sing through Sunday 3rd December

Auditions Sunday 10th December

OPEN TO ALL!

First cast sing through Wednesday 13th December

Rehearsals on Wednesdays and Sundays
starting 7th January

SHOW DATES 4th - 6th April

Rehearsals in Childrey, performances in Wantage

Mail us to register your interest and get all the latest news!
AmEgos.Theatre@gmail.com

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

HENLEY PLAYERS A Bunch of Amateurs

A comedy by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman

Ageing Hollywood action hero Jefferson Steele is looking forward to reviving his career by acting with the likes of Kenneth Branagh and Judi Dench in a production of King Lear at the birthplace of



Shakespeare, Stratford-upon-Avon. What he hasn't counted on is that the production is actually being staged in Stratford St John, a sleepy village in Suffolk, and his fellow cast members are an enthusiastic bunch of amateur thespians desperately trying to save their theatre. This laugh-out-loud comedy, written by Ian Hislop, is full of hilarious characters and snappy dialogue as acting worlds collide head-on.

When: 18-21 October 2023 at 7:30 pm

+ Matinee 21 October 2023 at 2:30 pm

Where: The Kenton Theatre, New Street,
Henley-on-Thames, RG9 2BP

Tickets:-

Wed & Thu - Adults £18; Conc £17

Fri & Sat Evenings - All tickets £20

Sat 2.30pm- Pay What You Like (Min £5).

From Box office: 01491 575 698 or
www.kentontheatre.co.uk

Website: www.henleyplayers.com

This amateur production of "A Bunch of Amateurs" is presented by special arrangement with CONCORD THEATRICALS

SINODUN PLAYERS

The Welkin by Lucy Kirkwood Music by Alex Rimes

The Welkin is a passionate plea for humanity and mercy in a world where The Law and Justice are only incidental bedfellows and bacon, leeks and nutmegs can weigh more than a woman's life.



Set in 1759 in a rural county town on the borders of Norfolk and Suffolk, The Welkin is a tour de force that touches on so many issues that have parallels with today's world.

It is a rich and powerful ensemble play with strong characters of all different stations and personalities, portraying the human condition and how we cope with whatever life deals us. These are tough people, Rabelaisian and robust, yet very aware of society and respectability, because the consequences for anyone without status who steps over the line can be truly horrific.

First performed at the National Theatre in 2020, Lucy Kirkwood's acclaimed play The Welkin is set in 1759 on the Suffolk/Norfolk border, while England awaits the return of Halley's Comet.

Lucy Kirkwood is a winner of Best New Play at the Olivier and Evening Standard Awards (Chimerica) as well as the Critic's Circle and Susan Smith Blackburn Award, Writer's Guild Best Play Award (The Children) and has been nominated for a Tony Award and Evening Standard Best Newcomer Award. Her works include plays for The National Theatre, The Royal Court Theatre, Bush Theatre, Gate Theatre and the Manhattan Theatre Club.

Watch our theatrical trailer at :-
www.sinodunplayers.org.uk

When: Wed 18th to Sat 21st October at 7.30pm

Where: Corn Exchange Theatre, Market Place,
Wallingford, OX10 0EG

Tickets: £12 from the Wallingford Corn Exchange -
www.cornexchange.org.uk

This amateur production of "The Welkin" is performed by arrangement with Nick Hern Books

COMPTON PLAYERS

The Ghosts of Halfway House

by Richard James

A spooky drama
for Halloween!

Simon and Daphne are looking around an old house, with Simon's mother in tow. They aren't convinced it's the right place for them, and Mr Godley the estate agent is unusual. They're in for quite an evening before they find out more than they expected about the house and its history.

When: Thu 19th to Sat 21st October at 7.30pm

Where: Compton Village Hall, RG20 6NP.

Tickets see www.comptonplayers.co.uk



ABINGDON OPERATIC SOCIETY

'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang'

AOS will be taking to the skies in the world's most beloved flying car. That's right, Chitty



Chitty Bang Bang is coming to Abingdon.

Based on the 1968 film, starring Dick Van Dyke, Sally Ann Howes and Lionel Jeffries, which was itself based on the original book by Ian Fleming, the musical version made its debut at the London Palladium in 2002, before moving on to Broadway in 2005. Since then, it has also been a popular touring show, with multiple productions playing to packed audiences in major cities in the UK & US.

All of the well-known songs from the film are in the show, including 'Toot Sweets', 'Me Ol' Bamboo', 'Truly Scrumptious', 'Chu-Chi Face', and of course, 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang'.

Everyone at AOS is excited that we've managed to be one of the few amateur societies in the country chosen to produce this show, and we can't wait to start work in 2023.

When: Tue 24th to Sat 28th October at 7.30pm
(plus a 2.30pm Saturday matinee)

Where: The Amey Theatre, Abingdon School,
OX14 1DE.

Tickets: from £11.50 to £19.50
see www.abingdonoperatic.co.uk

OXFORD THEATRE GUILD

Constellations

by Nick Payne

Every choice, every decision you've ever and never made exists in an unimaginably vast ensemble of parallel universes.



Marianne meets Roland. Marianne is an astrophysicist, and Roland keeps bees. How will it go, and come, and go? Come again? In an infinite number of universes, anything can happen. Which is good, because Marianne is running out of time.

Constellations is a play about possibilities, about different outcomes from the same starting point, about paths taken and paths not taken. Marianne, an astrophysicist, explores the theory of the multiverse –

that there are an infinite number of universes, each differing slightly or greatly from our own. The play's structure reflects this, as the audience is presented with multiple versions of the same events, varying in their outcomes. Also, events do not necessarily occur in a linear temporal sequence.

Funny, poignant and unorthodox, this celebrated contemporary play comprises over fifty, mostly very short, scenes interspersed by changes in lighting state (probably just blackout) which indicate change of 'universe'. It offers exciting and challenging opportunities to the actors.

Dates: Tuesday 24 to Sunday 29 October at 7:30pm

plus 2:30pm on Saturday and Sunday

Location: The Old Fire Station, 40 George St, Oxford, OX1 2AQ

Tickets: Standard: £14 | Pay more: £16 | Pay less: £12 | Preview: £10

From www.oldfirestation.org.uk or 01865 263990

BANBURY OPERATIC SOCIETY

Kinky Boots

Book by Harvey Fierstein with music and lyrics by Cyndi Lauper.

Based on a true story, Kinky Boots tells of the journey of Charlie Price who seeks to save his family's Northamptonshire-based shoe business from closure – with the help of an unlikely partner: the fabulous drag performer Lola!

This award-winning musical shines a light on what is most important to our community, whilst at the same time challenging us to be more inclusive and accepting of others.

So come and join us at Price and Sons for an evening of amazing music, fantastic dancing and Kinky Boots!

This is a fabulous musical with great music, deep characters and an important message of truth and acceptance (of others and yourself).

Dates: Wed 25 to Sat 28 October 7.30pm

+ 2.30 pm Matinee Saturday 28th October

Where: Wykham Theatre, Wykham Park Academy, Ruskin Road, OX16 9HY

Tickets: £16 (£14 concession) from www.ticketsource.co.uk/banburyoperaticsociety

Email: banburyoperaticsociety@gmail.com

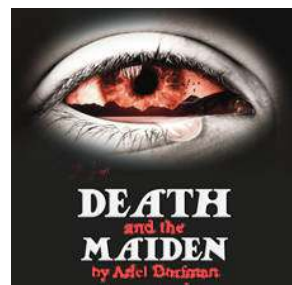
Website: <https://www.banburyoperaticsociety.co.uk/>



HENLEY A.O.D.S. Death and the Maiden

by Ariel Dorfman

Ariel Dorfman's gripping psychological thriller *Death and the Maiden* is compelling, thought-provoking, relentlessly paced and filled with surprises. Presented fifty years after Pinochet's infamous coup in Chile, which inspired Dorfman to begin writing it, the play asks a gamut of moral and emotional questions that are all too relevant today.



Death and the Maiden had its premiere at the Royal Court in October 1991 and the following February transferred to the West End. It won the 1992 Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Play and has since been staged worldwide. In 1994, it was adapted into a film by Roman Polanski.

When: Thu 26th to Sat 28th October 2023 at 7.45pm

Where: The HAODS Studio, 19 New St, Henley-on-Thames RG9 2BP

Tickets: £12 available from

www.ticketsource.co.uk/haodshenley

WITNEY DRAMATIC SOCIETY

An Evening of Horror and Comedy

The Monkey's Paw & The 39 Steps

Witney Dramatic Society are delighted to be returning to the Corn Exchange after many years and to be performing in the new Arts Centre. We welcome one and all to a night of horror (woohoo!) and comedy (haha!).



We present two one act plays for your entertainment.

The first is **The Monkey's Paw**, a very old horror story, first written in 1902 by W.W. Jacobs, which has been adapted for our production by Tessa Bamborough (aka our very own Teresa Heys). The only thing you need to know about this play is – be very careful what you wish for!

Our second play is **The 39 Steps**, Abridged. (an adaptation by Patrick Barlow, from the novel by John Buchan, & the movie by Alfred Hitchcock). The original story is still recognisable in this fast paced, frantic and funny production.

When: Thu 26th to Sat 28th October at 7:30pm

Where: Corn Exchange, Market Square, Witney

Tickets: £12 available from:-

Truck Store, Woolgate Centre, Witney

Online (£1 booking fee) from Ticket Source.

www.ticketsource.co.uk/witney-dramatic-society

FARINGDON DRAMATIC SOCIETY

Act Naturally

A comedy by Giles Scott

"Act Naturally" is a very funny comedy in two parts. Or is it two comedies? Act One is a chaotic committee meeting of the village's Historical Sites Preservation Society who urgently need to raise funds. The committee decide to write and stage a play. "It will be fun", they agree. And "how hard can it be?". Act Two is their play: "A Shot in the Park".

A selection of drinks and snacks will be available for purchase at the bar.

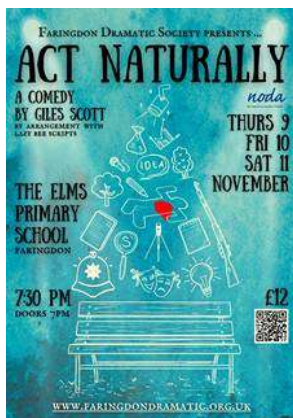
When: Thu 9th to Sat 11th November at 7.30pm

Where: The Elms Primary School (was Faringdon Junior School),
The Elms, Gloucester Street, Faringdon SN7 7HZ

Tickets: £12. - free programme included.

from our Online Box Office only! see :-

Website: www.faringdondramatic.org.uk



GORING GAP PLAYERS

'Gaslight'

by Patrick Hamilton.

First staged in 1938 and set in fog-bound 1880s' London, it is a rather dark psychological thriller and is the origin of the term 'gaslighting' - abusive behaviour designed to take control of another person's life.

The play is set in a large house owned by Jack Manningham who lives there with his wife Bella, a housekeeper and a maid. Bella is clearly on edge and the stern reproaches of her overbearing husband (who flirts with the servants in front of his wife) make matters worse. What most perturbs Bella is Jack's unexplained disappearances from the house. He will not tell her where he is going and this increases her anxiety.

Dates: Wed 15th to Sat 18th November at 8.00pm

Doors open 7.30m

Venue: Morrell Room, Church Lane, Streatley,
Berkshire, RG8 9HT

Tickets: £12 per person

From: 'Inspiration', Goring Arcade
or Jean 01491 873530

online: www.trybooking.co.uk/CQTF

Website:- www.goringgapplayers.co.uk



JIGSAW STAGE PRODUCTIONS

'A Night at the Musicals'

The West End comes to Oxfordshire.



Featuring a dazzling array of big numbers from many well-loved West End shows.

You can expect all the big numbers from family shows such as *Joseph*, *Mamma Mia*, *Oliver!* and many more, plus a *42nd Street* tap dance.

No need to make the big schlep into London, this show will be coming to a venue near you. With plenty of 'Um Pa Pa', a dash of 'Dancing Queen', a splash of 'Titanic' and a trip down 'Easy Street', it's bound to be a great night of entertainment.

'A Night at the Musicals' will be on:-

Sat 11th Nov at Harwell Village Hall, Hi St, OX11 0EX

Sun 12th Nov at The Pump House, Faringdon,
22 Swan Lane, SN7 7AF

Sat 18th Nov at Steventon Village Hall, OX13 6RR

Sun 19th Nov at Old Mill Hall, Grove,
School Lane, OX12 7LB

Shows start at 7:30pm and refreshments will be available.

Tickets are £10 per adult and £6 per child (14 years and under).

Tickets will be available on the door and from
www.trybooking.com

or see our website for local outlets.:-

www.JigsawStageProductions.co.uk

THE STONESFIELD PLAYERS

Two, one-act plays

Written, directed and produced by local talent, exploring the power of human memory through connection, loss, love and laughter.



Part One:

The Private Collection – Written by Rebecca Sherlaw-Johnson and David Lines and directed by Rebecca Sherlaw-Johnson.

Many of us have private collections, of memories that we have never told anyone and prefer to leave safely locked away. Constance Amati – opera singer, diva, spy – has more than her fair share. But now, as she begins to reflect on her life, it is her younger self that insists on opening doors and confronting the memories she has kept suppressed all her life. From top-secret intelligence to the one who got away, Constance must come face-to-face with her past, whether she likes it or not.

Part Two: (Stonesfield Players Continued)

Can You Hear Me Mother – Written and Directed by Nicky Holland.....

It's spring 2020 and Covid restrictions keep Rita confined in the small flat she's recently moved to. How can she keep in touch with friends and family? And why is everyone comparing the pandemic to WWII? Rita's wartime childhood was nothing like this - but memories and current events combine in a potent mix.

When: Fri 17th & Sat 18th Nov at 7.30pm
(doors open 7pm)

Where: Stonesfield Village Hall, OX29 9UH

Tickets: £10

Box office email andrew.tacon@outlook.com or from Suriya Express Store, Stonesfield OX29 8PZ

KINGSTON BAGPUIZE D.G.

Cinderella a Pantomime by Tom Whalley.

Join us for the most wonderful Pantomime of them all, Cinderella. A very modern take on this popular classic, with family fun for all, lots of laughs and a few surprises along the way.



When: Thu 23rd & Fri 24th Nov 7.30
and Sat 25th Nov matinee 2pm + eve 6.30pm

Where: Southmoor Village Hall, OX13 5BY

Tickets: Adult £12, Child £7

Family of 4 (2 adults & 2 children) £35

Tickets from:

www.ticketsource.co.uk/kingston-bagpuize-drama-group

A licensed bar, other refreshments & free parking.

THE WYCHWOOD PLAYERS

'Flare Path' by Terence Rattigan.

This play was first staged in 1942, and is widely regarded as a classic. Set in an hotel near a Bomber Command airbase during the Second World War, the story involves a love triangle between a pilot, his actress wife and a famous film star. The play is based in part on Rattigan's own wartime experiences as a tail gunner in RAF Coastal Command, and was later adapted for film as The Way to the Stars. Directed by Hazel Hughes



When: 23-25 November at 7.30pm

Where: The New Beaconsfield Hall,
Shipton under Wychwood, OX7 6BQ

Tickets: information from
www.WychwoodPlayers.com

BARTHOLOMEW PLAYERS

"Silver Lining"

a hilarious comedy by Sandi Toksvig

It tells the tale of a group of extraordinary yet forgotten women, who come together one treacherous night to recreate "The Great Escape" – senior-citizen style!



On one dark and stormy night in the upper day room of the Silver Retirement Home, five elderly women are trading stories of their remarkable (or, in some cases, unremarkable) lives.

With the storm floods rising and no rescue team in sight, the ladies are faced with the sudden realisation that in order to survive they are going to have to do what they have done for their entire lives – do it themselves!

Contains language and material which may offend.

Dates: Wed 29th Nov to Sat 2nd Dec at 7.30pm
Doors open: 7pm

Venue: Eynsham Village Hall, Back Lane, Eynsham, OX29 4QW

Tickets: £12.00 (no concessions)
online from <https://www.trybooking.co.uk/CPES>

in advance from Denise Santilli, 07721 744020,

or email bart.players@gmail.com

or from Evenlode DIY in Eynsham

or on the door

Website: www.bartholomewplayers.co.uk

ST PETER'S PLAYERS

Goldilocks and the Three Bears by Stephen Duckham

A fun-filled family panto that includes all the excitement of a colourful Carnival setting, complete with Goldilocks, and a host of other lively characters!



When: Wed 29th Nov to Sat 2nd Dec at 7.30pm
+ Saturday matinee at 2.30pm

Where: Wolvercote Village Hall, Wolvercote Grn, OX2 8AB

Tickets - see website for updates.

Website: <http://www.stpetersplayers.co.uk>

CHILTERN PLAYERS

three one-act plays by David Tristram.

"The Extraordinary Revelations of Orca the Goldfish", "Carrot", and "Peas"

Carrot, Peas and The Extraordinary Revelations of Orca the Goldfish, skilfully explore different aspects of human nature, behaviour and relationships. From worker / boss misunderstandings through to the sometimes misinterpreted conversations on a blind-date, and then to the many fantasies of a bored middle-aged couple, this trio of adult comedies promise an evening not just of humour but surprise.

When: Thu 30 Nov, to Sat 2nd Dec at 8pm

Where: Peppard War Memorial Hall,
Rotherfield Peppard, RG9 5JA

Tickets: £10 from 07768 371609 or
email: chilternplayerstickets@yahoo.com

Website: www.chilternplayers.co.uk



DRAYTON PLAYERS

Away with the Fairies at Christmas

by Sue Hadley

THE BIG CHRISTMAS SHOW - It's full of fun & madness!



Being senior doesn't mean you can be exploited. Even if your DIY man is an Elvis Impersonator. A unique and inspiring Christmas story, where good triumphs over evil at "The Foresters" sheltered accommodation. One act tells it all! This is an ADULT SHOW were grown ups have fun and laughter.

SPECIAL: Stay and meet the cast this Christmas show:- Bar open after the show. Raffle and fun.

When: Fri 8th December at 8pm (doors 7.30)
Sat 9th December at 7.30pm (doors 7pm)

Where: Steventon Village Hall, The Green,
Steventon, OX13 6RR

Tickets: £7.50 from www.trybooking.com
Tel 01235 821351 or on the door

DORCHESTER A.D.S.

Goldilocks & the Three Bears

a pantomime
by Tom Whalley

Roll up! Roll up! The Circus is in town!

It's Goldilocks and the Three Bears. with a circus theme

Dame Gertie Dollop runs the show with her son, Silly Billy but they have fallen on hard times. Particularly with the dastardly Ringmaster Heinkel, owner of the rival circus, up to his old tricks. Dame Gertie needs a miracle after their honeypot of pennies is accidentally stolen by three porridge hungry, talking bears. Could they be the new star attraction Gertie has been searching for?

Find out in the big top pantomime that's just right!

Dates: Thu 30 Nov & Fri 1 Dec at 7.00pm
+ Sat 2 December at 2.30pm AND 6.30pm

Where: Dorchester on Thames Village Hall,
7 Queen Street, OX10 7HR

Tickets: £12 (Under 12s £9)
from www.ticketsource.co.uk/dads
or via the DADS website www.dads.org.uk



ABINGDON DRAMA CLUB

Peter Pan

Adapted from the
novel by J.M Barrie

When:-

Thu 11th to Sat 13th
January - 7:30pm

+Sat 13th & Sun 14th
January - 2:30pm

Wed 17th to Sat 20th
January - 7:30pm

+Sat 20th January - 2:30pm

Where: Unicorn Theatre, Checker Walk,
Abingdon, OX14 3JB

Tickets 12, £10 concessions

Groups of 10+ £10 (select concession rate)

All tickets are sold as unreserved seating.

Our Front of House team will do their very best to seat people together but please arrive in good time or this may not be possible.

Tickets also available from: The Bookstore,
The Abingdon Precinct (15 Bury St), Abingdon



**OXFORDSHIRE DRAMA NETWORK
PANTO/WINTER PRODUCTION
FESTIVAL 2023/2024**



Once again we will be running our Winter Competition for pantomimes as well as Seasonal Plays, Musicals etc. Below is a list of some of the awards that we will be presenting next year at our AGM.

The entry form to enter your production into the Festival will be available to from our website in the very near future, or email us to send you a copy

AWARDS

The following are typical of the awards which will be presented at the Annual General Meeting next year.

- The All-Round Production .
- Rising Star Award for Under 18's
- Musical Award – this can include any incidental music, song, live performance.
- Best Costume
- Chorus Award
- Best Baddie
- Best Cameo
- Best Front of House experience
- Best Tech – this will include special effects, lighting, sound
- Magic Moment
- Best Comedy Performance

Your ODN Committee

Officers

Chair	Karen Carey (Didcot Phoenix Drama Group)
Secretary	Becki Brewis (Wootton Players)
Newsletter/Website	Mike Davies (Drayton Players & Jigsaw Stage Productions)
Treasurer	Post unfilled – we are desperately in need of a volunteer
Membership Secretary	Jess Ebberson (Kennington Amateur Dramatic Society)

General members

Mike Lacey	(Kingston Bagpuize)
Sue Hadley	(Drayton Players & Buttercross Productions)
Mandyrae Jessey	(BODS of Wychwood)

Email: info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org

Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/1324585987569767

Instagram: www.instagram.com/oxfordshiredramanetwork