

Civic LEEDS · LEISURE · SERVICES Theatre



PROGRAMME

Civic

LEEDS · LEISURE · SERVICES

Theatre

General Manager and Licensee
GEOFFREY MOGRIDGE

Senior Assistant Manager
STEVEN CARTWRIGHT

Assistant Manager
SHIRLEY TARRAN

Chief Technician
PETER WADDICOR

Technicians
SIMON ANDERSON
JAMES VARLEY

Deputy Stage Manager
PAULINE MOWER

Publicity
GEOFFREY MOGRIDGE
ROBERT WILLIAMSON

Catering Supervisor
AVRIL TOPHAM

Box Office
HELEN RICHMOND
SHIRLEY SHORTALL
CAROLINE STRAIN

**Front of House
and Bar Staff**
PETER AINSWORTH
MATTHEW BAYNE
BEN CHALLIS
LINDA DIVERS
KEVIN DODSWORTH
SYLVIA GOODING
HILDA HAYNOD
ANTHONY HUTCHINSON
JEAN WALKER

Catering Staff
KATHERINE DUNKERLEY
SUSIE HAYNES
LESLEY KENNAN
GABRIELLE RICHARDS
RICHARD TARRAN
MARGARET WACKETT

LEEDS ARTS CENTRE PRESENTS
THE

BEGGAR's OPERA

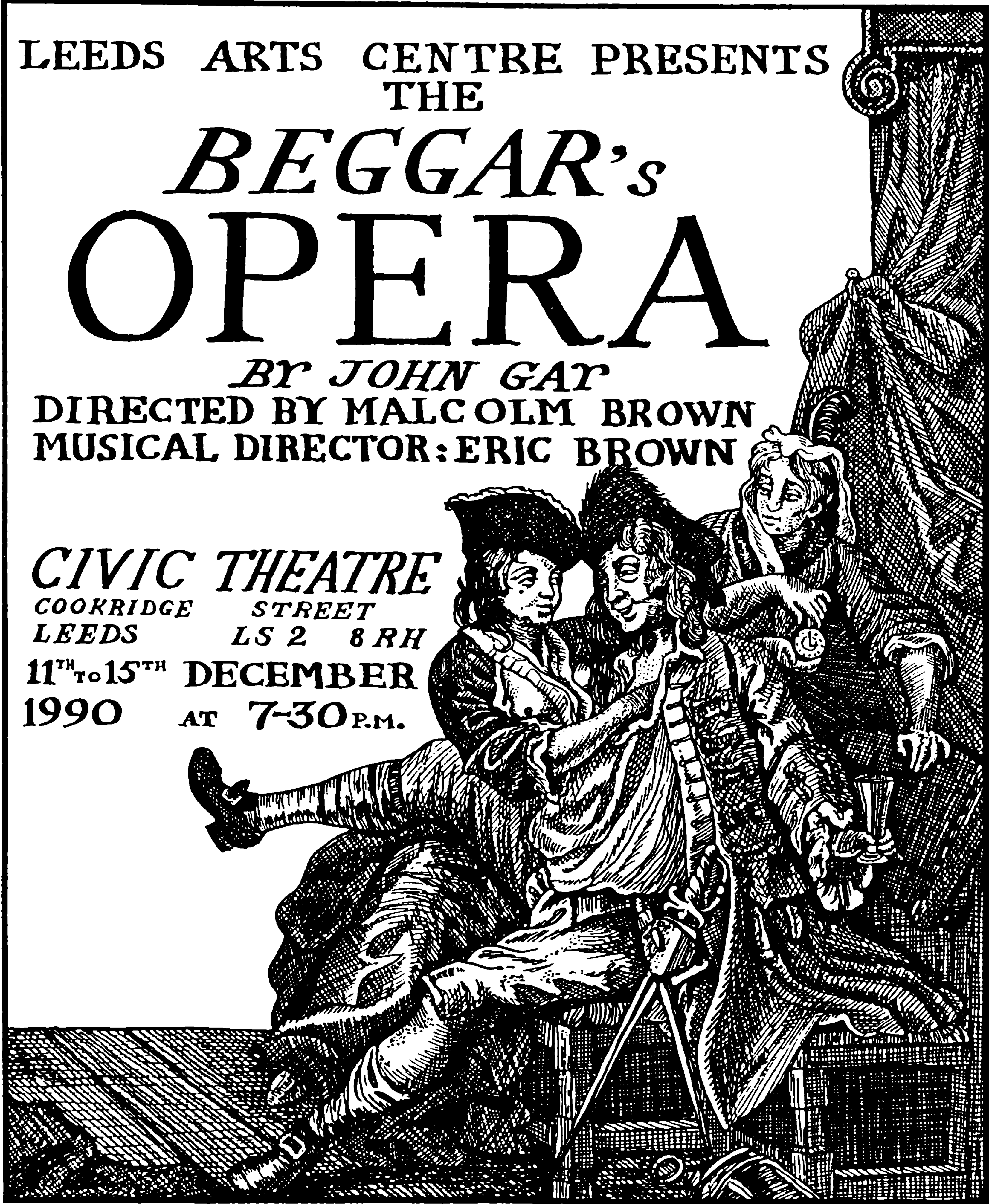
By JOHN GAR

DIRECTED BY MALCOLM BROWN
MUSICAL DIRECTOR: ERIC BROWN

CIVIC THEATRE

COOKRIDGE STREET
LEEDS LS 2 8RH

11TH TO 15TH DECEMBER
1990 AT 7-30 P.M.



CAST

THE BEGGAR..... Geoffrey Hillyard

MR PEACHUM, a 'fence' and thief-taker..... Edwin Barracrough
MRS. PEACHUM, his wife..... Monica Brown
POLLY PEACHUM, their daughter Gwyneth Hadley
FILCH, their servant Chris Hirst

CAPTAIN MACHEATH, a highwayman Neil Roberts

Members of Macheath's gang

MATT OF THE MINT David Mallinson
BEN BUDGE..... Chris McAdam
JEMMY TWITCHER Martyn Drake
CROOK-FINGERED JACK George Westmoreland
ROBIN OF BAGSHOT Martin Key
NIMMING NED George Teale
HARRY PADDINGTON Chris Hirst

DRAWER Chris McAdam

Ladies of the Town

MRS. COAXER Christine Wilson
DOLLY TRULL Kathryn Heneachon
MRS. VIXEN June Stevenson
BETTY DOXY Jean Blundell
JENNY DIVER..... Margaret Savage
MRS. SLAMMEKIN Joyce King
SUKY TAWDRY Denise Forton
MOLLY BRAZEN Shirley Hamer

MR. LOCKIT, Jailor of Newgate Prison Martin Key
LUCY LOCKIT, his daughter Shirley Hamer

MRS. DIANA TRAPES, a Tally-woman Betty Triggs

JAILORS Martyn Drake and George Westmoreland

MUSICIANS: Harpsichord: Eric Brown
Violin: Rachel Staples
Cello: Richard Bacon

DIRECTED AND DESIGNED BY MALCOLM BROWN

The action of the play takes place in London in 1728 in
Peachum's House, a Tavern, Newgate Jail, a Gaming House,
Peachum's Warehouse and at Tyburn.

MUSICAL DIRECTOR Eric Brown
STAGE MANAGER Trevor Money
SET CONSTRUCTION Les Wormald, George Westmoreland,
 Geoffrey Hillyard
PROPS Doreen Parker
CHOREOGRAPHY Jean Blundell
WARDROBE Maggie Rhodes
LIGHTING Peter Waddicor
FRONT OF HOUSE MANAGER..... George Barker
BOX OFFICE Margaret Rhodes & Members of the Arts Centre

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

*Life is a jest, and all things show it,
I thought so once, but now I know it.*

John Gay's epitaph, composed by himself, is an apt comment on his life. He was born in 1685, orphaned at an early age, made his way to London in 1706, and soon became acquainted with Swift, Pope, Congreve and Addison.

The original idea for "The Beggar's Opera" came from Swift, who suggested that "A Newgate pastoral might make an odd pretty sort of thing." The first production opened in 1728 and was an instant success.

The work is ostensibly about thieves, highwaymen, whores and pimps, but it is also clearly an indictment of eighteenth-century politics and society in general, and of Prime Minister Walpole in particular. A great administrator, Walpole was also an insatiable womaniser who used political bribery shamelessly and amassed a fortune by extremely dubious means.

The character of Peachum (Peach - to inform against) is based on Jonathan Wilde, who was executed at Tyburn in May, 1724. Known as "the King of Fences", Wilde became exceedingly wealthy. Motivated entirely by self-interest, Wilde himself admitted that he had informed against and brought to the gallows thirty-five highwaymen, twenty-two housebreakers and ten who had returned from transportation.

The character of Macheath is probably based on Jack Shepherd, a highwayman who made several miraculous escapes from prison before being hanged in 1724.

Gay originally intended that the songs in "The Beggar's Opera" should be sung without accompaniment. It was only late in rehearsals that instrumental backing was provided by Dr. Johann Pepusch. The melodies that Gay used range from simple folk-songs to sophisticated airs by Purcell and Handel, which would all have been familiar to the audiences of the time.

On the strength of this one play, Gay became the most talked-about writer of the day. When he died in 1732 he was honoured with a magnificent funeral in Westminster Abbey.

"The Beggar's Opera" has gone on running, gaining for itself the reputation of being the most successful musical show in the history of the theatre.

P.T.O.

GLOSSARY of places mentioned and terms used in the play.

St. Giles's: the parish of St. Giles's-in-the-Fields; a crime-ridden slum.

forty pounds: the reward paid by the government to an informer whose evidence led to conviction and execution for theft.

Newgate: London's principal prison from the twelfth to nineteenth centuries.

Sessions: the assizes or criminal trials held eight times a year at the Sessions House in the Old Bailey.

Marybone: now Marylebone, the centre of London gambling.

Moor-fields: a disreputable district frequented by members of the underworld.

Garnish: the system of tips which prisoners were required to pay in Newgate.

Ordinary: the Chaplain of Newgate.

Child-getter: women convicted of capital crimes could not be hung if they were pregnant.

Lock: warehouse for storing stolen goods.

Tally-woman: one who rented expensive clothes to prostitutes.

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The next Guild production will be the LIDOS production of
"GOLDILOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS"
Wednesday 9th - Saturday 19th January 1991.

The next LEEDS ARTS CENTRE production will be
"SPRING AND PORT WINE"
Tuesday 19th - Saturday 23rd February 1991

You may not realise that the costumes you have seen tonight, and countless others from different periods, are available for hire from The Leeds Arts Centre Costume Collection at reasonable rates. Telephone Leeds 756796 and discuss your requirements with Mrs. Margaret Rhodes, our wardrobe mistress.

General Information

Theatre Bar and Buffet

Good food and drinks are always available in the comfort of the Civic Theatre Bar.

The Bar is open from

11.30am—2.30pm (Mon—Fri)

6.15pm—10.30pm (Mon—Thurs)

6.45pm—11.00pm (Fri—Sat)

And from 7.00pm on Sundays when there is a performance

Facilities for Disabled People

We are pleased to accommodate patrons in wheelchairs. The Theatre has special toilet facilities and there is a ramp entrance to the building in Vernon Street. Please book in advance as space is limited. Telephone 456343 for further details.

Free Mailing List

If you would like to receive regular details of future events, please write to: **The Mailing List, Civic Theatre, Cookridge Street, Leeds LS2 8BH.**

Interval Drinks

Avoid the interval rush by placing your drinks order at the bar before the performance commences.

In accordance with the requirements of the Licensing Sub-Committee of Leeds City Council:

- (a) The public may leave at the end of the performance by all exit and entrance doors, and such doors must at that time be open.
- (b) All gangways, passages and staircases must be kept entirely free from chairs or any other obstruction.
- (c) Persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the intersecting gangways, or stand in any unseated space in the auditorium, unless standing in such a space as been specially allowed by the Licensing Committee. A notice is exhibited in that part of the auditorium in which standing has been sanctioned.
- (d) The safety curtain must be lowered and raised once immediately before the commencement of each performance so as to ensure it being in proper working order.

The Leeds Civic Theatre shares the Institute Buildings with the Leeds College of Music. This may mean that occasionally performances may be subject to slight acoustic problems. Whilst both parties do everything within their power to keep this to a minimum, we cannot prevent it completely. We apologise, therefore, for any inconvenience which may be caused.

STRICTLY NO SMOKING IN THE AUDITORIUM

The Taking of Photographs in the Auditorium is Prohibited.



CIVIC THEATRE COOKRIDGE STREET LEEDS LS2 8BH

Tel (0532) 434389 BAR & CATERING