

Leeds Arts Centre Presents...

The Flint Street Nativity

by Tim Firth



November 7th - 10th 7:30pm
Sat 10th November matinee performance 2:00pm
CARRIAGEWORKS THEATRE



LEEDS ARTS CENTRE was formed in 1945 as an amateur society to encourage and foster interest in the arts. Originally it comprised Drama groups (including Children's Theatre), a Fine Arts group and Musical, Literary and Film sections and was based in the Civic Theatre (now Leeds City Museum). Leeds Arts Centre moved to its new home at the Carriageworks in 2005. We are a friendly society, working together to maintain the high standard of its productions. We now present four plays every season, usually in February, March/April, May/June and October, at the Carriageworks Theatre under the umbrella of Leeds Community Arts Network.

'Green Room' events give members the opportunity to perform short plays, extracts and rehearsed readings for a members only audience. They give newer members experience of acting, directing, backstage work and also offer the chance to perform new writing or more experimental work.

The society also hosts regular **play readings** and **social events**.

New members are always welcome, and you don't need any experience to join. As well as acting, you could become involved with directing, production management, stage management, set and costume design or construction, co-ordinating properties or costumes, prompting, sound recording and operation, front of house management and publicity. If you are interested in joining, then please speak to a member of our friendly team. You can also contact us by email at publicity@leedsartscentre.org.uk or in writing to The Membership Secretary, Leeds Arts Centre, c/o Carriageworks Theatre, Millennium Square, Leeds. LS2 3AD.

Leeds Arts Centre is run by a committee of members which is elected every year. We are a registered charity and are funded by the money we make from ticket sales, subscriptions and fund-raising activities.

Our members range in age from 18 to 80+ and we have a strong core of both younger and older members, who come from a wide range of backgrounds. To find out more, why not visit www.leedsartcentre.org.uk where you can complete an application form in the 'Join Us' section.



Welcome to Leeds Arts Centre's production of The Flint Street Nativity

Writer Tim Firth & Flint Street Junior School

Rather unusually, 'The Flint Street Nativity' appeared first in 1999 as a BBC television film, (directed by Marcus Mortimer). The film starred such British comedy greats as Frank Skinner, Neil Morrissey and Jane Horrocks (to name but a few).

The story, written by Tim Firth, was based on decades of his recollections and those of his family and friends (the vast majority of whom were primary school teachers). It is often stated that the primary school you see in that feature film was modelled on Firth's own primary school (Stockton Heath).

It wasn't until 2006 that Firth adapted the TV screenplay into the playscript we have today. First performed at the Liverpool Playhouse, 'Flint Street' quickly became the most successful Christmas production in that theatre's history. It has remained a firm favourite with amateur and professional groups ever since.

This was not Firth's first venture into theatre, having written a number of short pieces whilst studying at Cambridge. Later, at the Stephen Joseph Theatre in Scarborough, his one act play 'A Man of Letters' was so well received it prompted Alan Ayckbourn to commission the now critically acclaimed "Neville's Island" from him.

Firth continues to work prolifically, releasing musicals, stage adaptations of films and original theatre pieces with his latest musical "The Girls" (co-written with Gary Barlow) currently touring.



Cast Biographies

The Flint Street Nativity Cast

Turn to page 8 for a look into the future for the children of Flint Street Junior School (and their headmaster/director).

Mary - Pam Wilson



Pam is amazed to realise that she has been a member of LAC for more than 40 years, running the whole gamut of roles from naive ingénue to curmudgeonly old woman, (and occasionally directing). Her most recent appearances have been in '*Unspoken*' and '*It's A Miracle*' (playing an old lady of nearly eighty – a nice contrast to this production's 7 year-old!) Off-stage she has contributed to wardrobe, props and set-painting and now edits LAC's monthly newsletter.

Gabriel - Sophie Joelle

Sophie is a keen writer, normally working behind the scenes, so it's a treat for her to step out onto the stage. She last appeared in the LAC production of '*Amazing Grace*' and is looking forward to performing again.





Cast Biographies

Star - Glen Routledge

I am currently a primary school teacher with a family of girls and have lived in Leeds for most of my adult life. I started acting at university. Later, I joined a semi-professional company putting on plays in schools and touring them in theatres in Yorkshire. My highlight was as Ralph *et al* in '*Bouncers*' at the City Varieties in Leeds. I have recently returned to The Carriageworks Theatre and have performed as Harry in '*The Lady Killers*' and Baldrick in '*Blackadder*'.



Innkeeper - Alan Buttery

Alan was a narrator in the golden goose and he likes Aston Villa and the wolves. He has have one big brother Graham and one little sister Kay. He likes spike the cockatiel and my granddads dog Rex but I don't like swede or sharp chips and I like it when Mrs Barraclough says have a banana.



Ass - Zack Jackson

Zack has been a member of LAC since 2009 and has performed in a number of plays with the group since then including '*Road*', '*Immaculate*', '*Sense and Sensibility*', '*The Birthday Party*', '*Harvey*', '*Blood and Ice*', and most recently the title role in '*The Colin Atkins Story*'.





Cast Biographies

Angel - Anji Clarke



From as far back as I can remember I have loved all aspects of performing from dance to drama. I joined LAC about 5 years ago. I got my first major role as Neat Woman, a witch condemned to die, in '*After Midnight, Before Dawn*' and then I landed my most challenging role to date as Truvy in '*Steel Magnolias*'. I am lucky enough to have landed the part of Angel, in '*Flint Street Nativity*'. I'm thoroughly enjoying rehearsals and eagerly look forward to performing it.

Wise Gold - Carol Bell

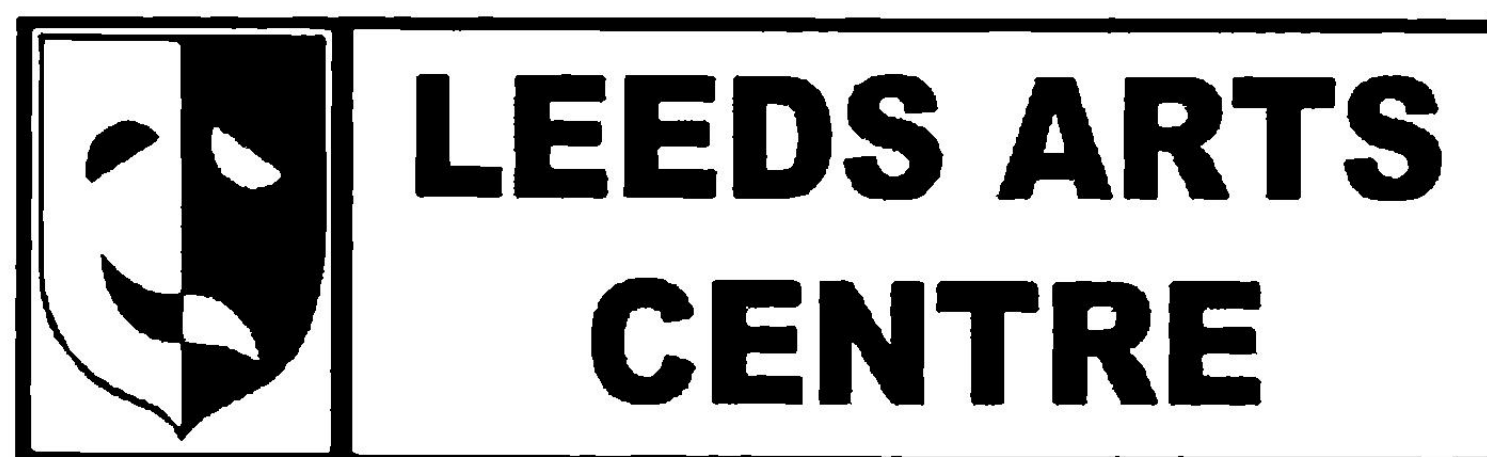
I have been a member of LAC for three years and this is my fourth production with them and my first time playing a child, although my nearest and dearest may not agree with the latter. As a child I liked dressing up and as an adult I still enjoy this. Perhaps our inner child needs to come out and play more often.



Wise Frank - Howard Russell



"Give me the boy at seven and I will give you the man" someone once said, but "Give me the man at sixty-six and I will give you the boy"? Second childhood/Seventh Age stuff this. Thanks to Ben and all at LAC for helping me get in touch with my inner child.



Cast Biographies

Herod - Mitchell Perry



1992 - born

2001 - debuted as Innkeeper #3 Whitkirk Primary nativity

2018 - currently starring as Herod

In the words of D:ream: Things can only get better.

Narrator - Fiona Galloway

I have been a member of Leeds Arts Centre for 6 years, and have been involved in multiple productions on and off stage. My passion for acting started at an early age, playing a star in my first nativity aged 4. However, my second appearance aged 5 didn't go quite as well, when I dropped and broke a large bowl whilst playing the Christmas chef! I have never played a narrator and have thoroughly enjoyed this part and embracing my inner child!



Shepherd - Taz Bennison



Tazmin is not a fan of Christmas, and consequently was not thrilled to have to start practising the carols for this show in August. However, she is delighted to be working with sheep and wearing a tea towel on her head. Between naps she enjoys laughing. Short-term goals include reaching enlightenment (preferably before Brexit kicks in). Tazmin's mum no longer cuts her hair, ignore the rumours.



The Plot

The Flint Street junior school is about to embark upon its Christmas nativity, something Mrs Horrocks (and those children who actually listened during rehearsals) have been preparing for, for months.

Mrs Horrocks' class of irascible seven year olds will not be performing the nativity at the new school hall as planned, but rather in the classroom they have spent the last year in.

This is due to an infestation of rare Great Crested Newts, putting a halt to the building of the new school hall, (and so any plans to move in before the Christmas holidays).

We join the children as the proud mums and dads (and occasional social worker) are taking their seats. As well as following the class through the tumultuous performance we also get a glimpse into the conversations and wild theories that children are like to conceive. From the true identity of Father Christmas to what exactly is inside that small flask Mrs Horrocks keeps drinking from.

Though the night may not go quite as planned it is certainly exciting and full of the honesty (and insanity) that all children are capable of.

There is one interval of 20 minutes.

The video and/ or audio recording of this performance by any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited.



Cast

(in order of appearance)

Mary
Gabriel
Star
Innkeeper
Ass
Angel
Wise Gold
Wise Frank
Herod
Narrator
Shepherd

Pam Wilson
Sophie Joelle
Glen Routledge
Alan Buttery
Zack Jackson
Anji Clarke
Carol Bell
Howard Russell
Mitchell Perry
Fiona Galloway
Taz Bennison

Production Team

Director
Production Manager
Properties

Wardrobe

Set

Sound and Lighting

Rehearsal Prompt
Musical Director
Front of House

Ben Hopwood
Jenny Carter
Carrieanne Vivenette,
Camilla Asher, Rebecca Dilks
Lucy Pietrzykowski and
Rachel Vernelle
Zoë Freedman, Maria
Kwater, Maureen Willis, Pam
Wilson, Karen Duquesne,
Lena Gazey and Alan Williams.
Steve Fryatt. Lucaz
Pietrzykowski, Martyn Drake,
Ardeshir Durrani, Margaret
Savage, Denise Davies, Ken
Taylor, Mary Nelson and Rich
Francis.
Duncan Evans, Steve Fryatt,
Josie Macfarlane and the
Carriageworks Theatre
Joyce King
Pam Wilson
Peter Dodd and LAC
members

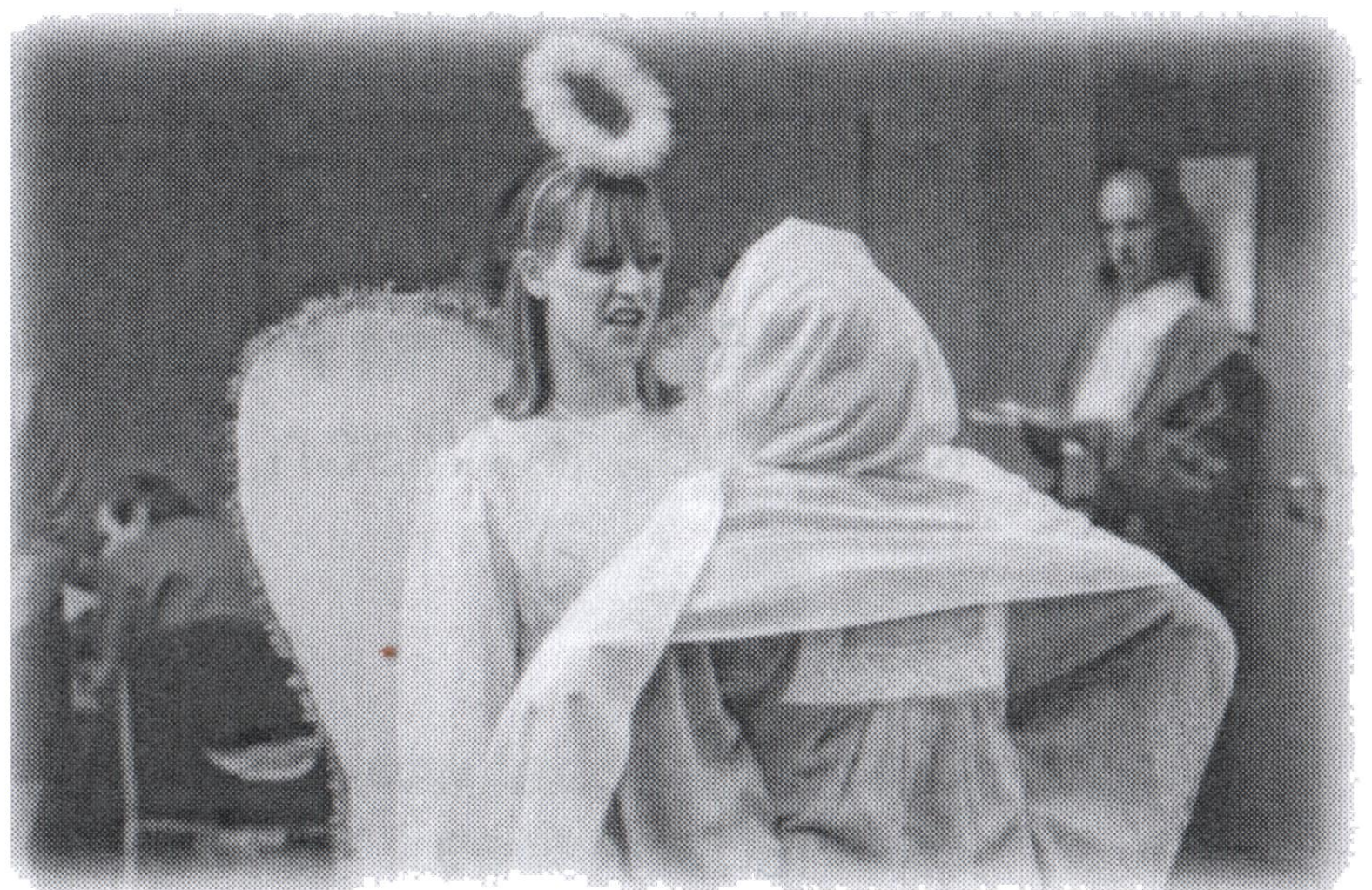
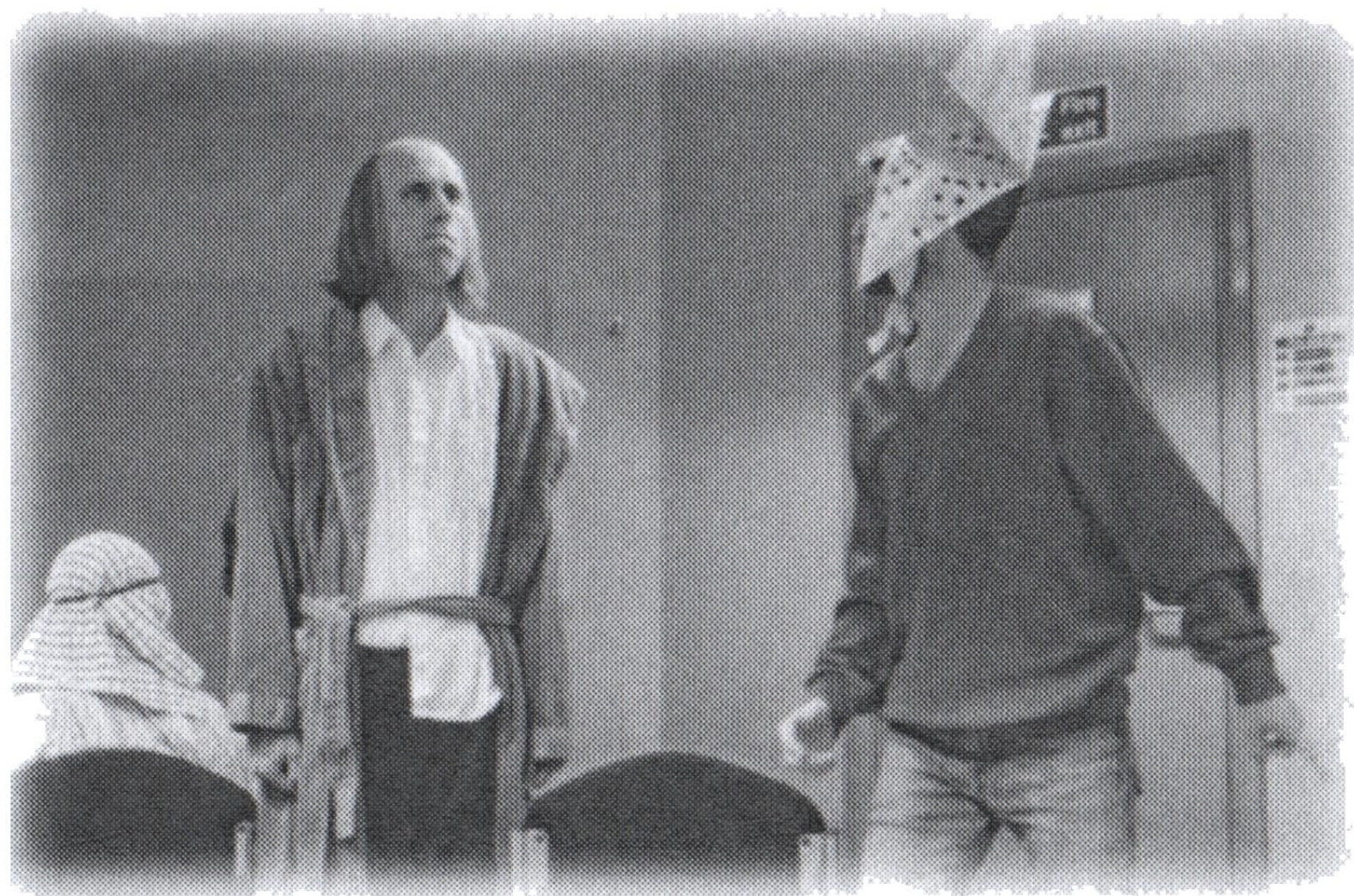
Rehearsal Photos



Thank you to Mark Hillyer for the photos.

<http://www.mjhstudio.co.uk/>

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Flint Street Junior School



PICTURED (From Left to Right)

Back
Front -

A Buttery, Z Jackson, G Routledge, H Russell, M Perry,
C Bell, T Bennison, S Joelle, B Hopwood, P Wilson,
A Clarke, F Galloway,

Thank you to Mark Hillyer for the photos.

<http://www.mjhstudio.co.uk/>



Leeds Arts Centre Costume Hire

Leeds Arts Centre is a registered charity and non-profit making organisation. We have a wide range of high quality men's and women's costumes available to hire at competitive rates.

These include:

- Period costumes
- Character costumes
- Evening dress
- Military uniforms
- Suits
- Accessories

For more information, please see our website at
www.leedsartscentre.org.uk/costume-hire

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News and info



<http://twitter.com/#!/leedsartscentre/>

Updates on the go

Visit www.leedsartscentre.org.uk/



Acknowledgements



Thank you to Mark Hillyer for taking rehearsal photographs

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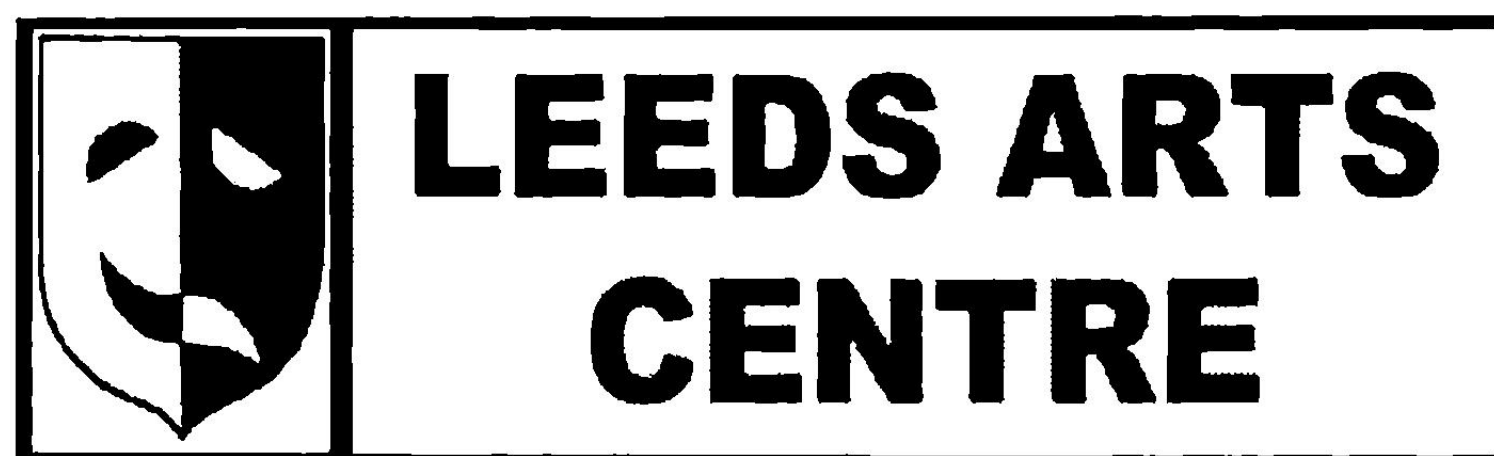
www.lfbb solicitors.co.uk

Thank you to Lewis Francis Blackburn Bray for printing the programmes



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Leeds Community Arts Network (Leeds CAN), previously known as Leeds Civic Arts Guild, is a group of 14 community drama, music, opera, youth theatre and other arts societies who mainly perform at The Carriageworks Theatre. Each group has its own identity, however they all come together as part of the Network, working with Leeds City Council and the Carriageworks. Leeds CAN has an ever growing membership and you can take part too. Everyone is welcome, from old hands to complete novices. This might be the opportunity you've always wanted to tread the boards and become the star of the show! Or you could experience the thrill of being backstage by getting involved in lighting, sound or set construction.

For more information and enquiries about joining, visit <http://www.leedscan.org.uk/>

The member societies are:-

Cosmopolitan Players (COS) Leeds Amateur Operatic Society (LAOS) – Leeds Arts Centre (LAC) – Leeds Children's Theatre (LCT) – Leeds Gilbert & Sullivan Society (G&S) – Leeds Insurance Dramatic & Operatic Society (LIDOS) – Leeds Writers' Circle – Leeds Youth Opera (LYO) – Morley Amateur Operatic Society (MAOS) – Northern Youth Theatre Company (NYTC) – Our Community Dances – Shatterproof – S.T.A.R.S and St Mary's Youth Theatre.

More great upcoming shows from Leeds CAN groups:



Legally Blonde - St Mary's Youth Theatre - 15th to 17th November 2018
Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs - LIDOS - 18th to 26th Jan 2019
Cheshire Cats - Cosmopolitan Players - 13th to 16th Feb 2019



Leeds Arts Centre's forthcoming productions are:-

Hamlet by William Shakespeare

Directed by Ken Taylor

Thursday 7th – Saturday 9th February 2019

Prince Hamlet's father, the King of Denmark, is dead. Hamlet is prevented from succeeding to the throne by his mother, Queen Gertrude, too quickly marrying his father's brother, Claudius, who becomes king in his place. Not only is Hamlet prevented from becoming King, but his Uncle Claudius is now his stepfather. When the old king appears as a ghost, he tells Hamlet that he was, in fact, murdered by Claudius. Hamlet is entreated by his father's ghost to take revenge. Hamlet schemes to do this by appearing to become mad, and alienating all who love him. It sometimes seems that he has truly lost his sanity. Claudius himself, fearing discovery of his fratricide, lays out plans to do away with Hamlet. The scene is set. Tragedy looms.

**No Exit (Huis Clos) by Jean-Paul Sartre (translated from the French
by Stuart Gilbert)**

Directed by CarrieAnne Cara Vivianette

April 2019

Three people are enduring a terrible existence that we can only imagine. Garcin, Inez and Estelle are strangers who find themselves impounded together after death as retribution for their sins in life. They are held captive in one room for eternity, abandoned in their own personal and vindictive hell. Left with only each other, the incarcerated trio attempt to come to terms with their situation. Each of the three has the power to exacerbate or alleviate this hell. Can they find resolution, or is there truly no exit?

The Mill on the Floss

by Helen Edmondson

Directed by Rachel Vernelle

June 2019

Tom and Maggie Tulliver, siblings growing up at Dorlcote Mill on the River Floss, have an intense and abiding bond. Maggie is intelligent, wilful and passionate; her tragedy is to have been born a girl. Tom is a practical, unforgiving boy, not cut out for the 'book learning' expected of him. Tom's tragedy is that he was born a boy. George Eliot's novel is no drawing-room affair of manners and this thrilling adaptation is theatrical and physical. Maggie is a young woman struggling to find her place in the world, battling the strictures put upon her sex and the disapproval of the censorious brother she loves above all else. We follow her desperate attempts to please others while remaining true to herself - she is a truly a heroine for our time.

Tickets will be available from the City Centre Box Office at the Town Hall or by telephoning 0113 376 0318.