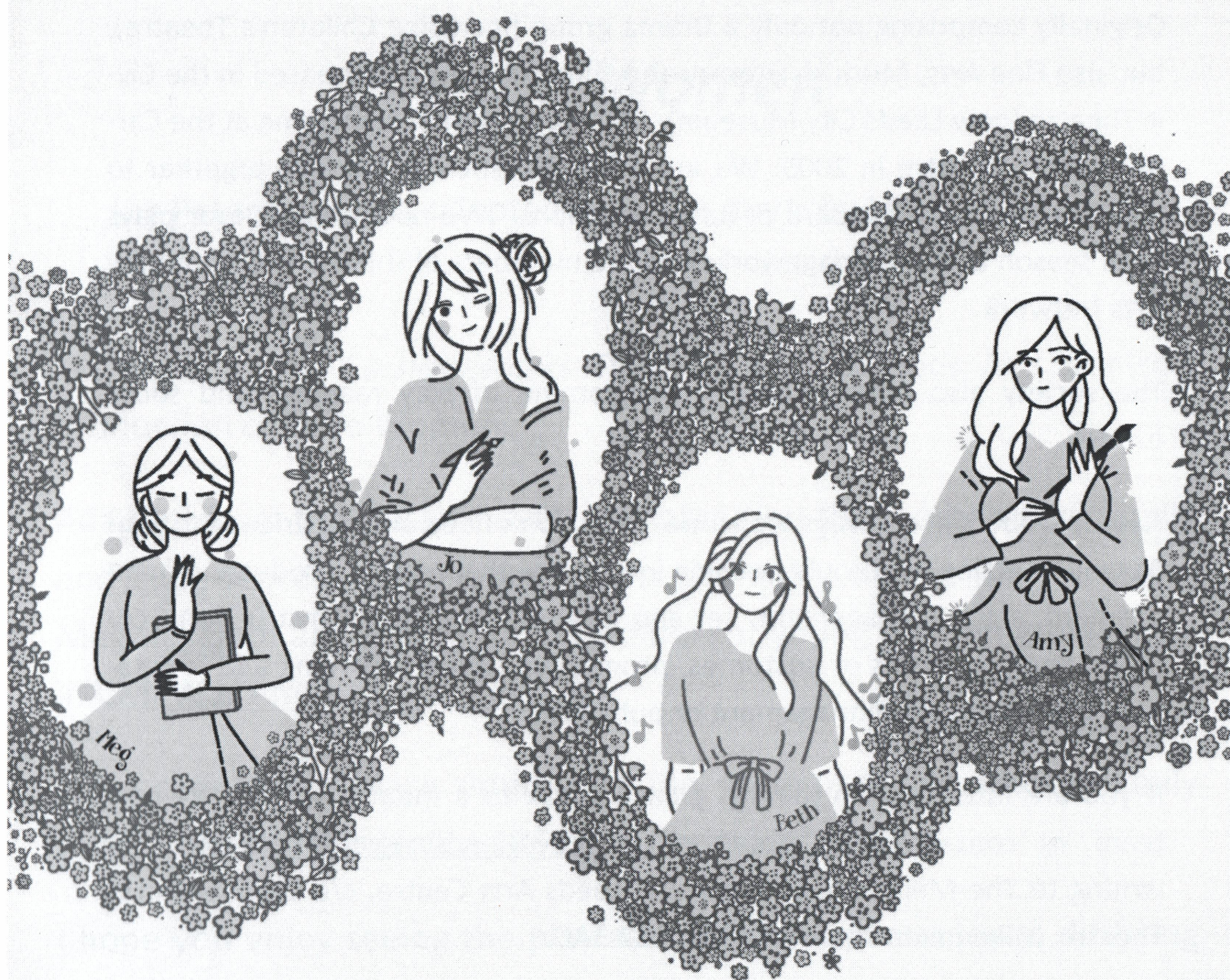


Leeds Arts Centre presents...

# LITTLE WOMEN

by Peter Clapham. Adapted from the novel by Louisa M. Alcott

Thursday 13th - Saturday 15th February 2020



This amateur production of "Little Women (Clapham)" is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH LTD a Concord Theatricals Company.







## About Leeds Arts Centre

Leeds Arts Centre (LAC) was formed in 1945 to foster interest in the arts. Originally comprising not only a Drama group (including Children's Theatre), but also Fine Arts, Musical, Literary and Film sections, it was based in the Civic Theatre (now Leeds City Museum). LAC moved to its' new home at the Carriageworks Theatre in 2005. We are a friendly society, working together to maintain the high standard of its' productions. We now present four plays each season at the Carriageworks and are members of the Leeds Community Arts Network.

The society also hosts a regular programme of play readings and social events.

**New members are always welcome** - 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 or publicity.

If you are interested in joining, please speak to a member of our friendly team. or contact us by email at [publicity@leedsartscentre.org.uk](mailto:publicity@leedsartscentre.org.uk) or in writing to The Membership Secretary, Leeds Arts Centre, c/o Carriageworks Theatre, Millennium Square, Leeds. LS2 3AD.

LAC 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 come from a wide range of backgrounds. To find out more, why not visit [www.leedsartcentre.org.uk](http://www.leedsartcentre.org.uk) where you can complete an application form in the 'Join Us' section.



## Welcome to Leeds Arts Centre's

### *Little Women*

(by Peter Clapham, adapted from the novel by Louisa M. Alcott)

*Welcome to the Carriageworks Theatre, and to Leeds Arts Centre's production of Little Women.*

Adapted from the classic novel, and based on the writer's own family and experiences, *Little Women* tells the story of the March sisters Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy: four very different young women growing up in Civil War America.

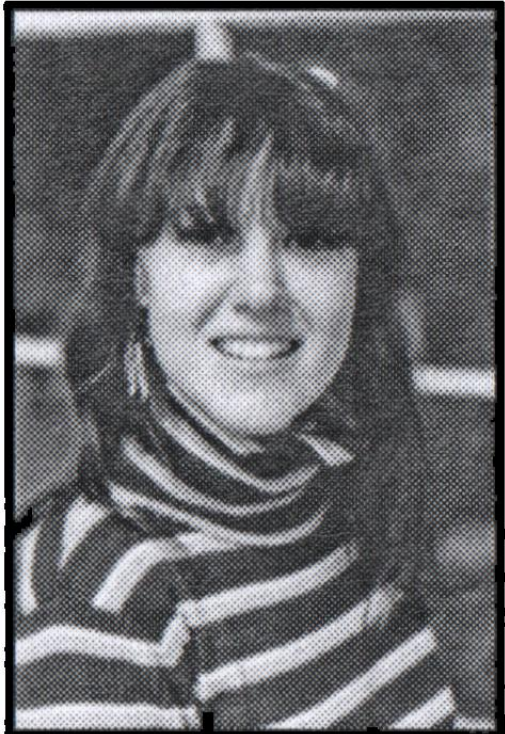
The action takes place entirely in the parlour of the March family home between Christmas, 1861 and Christmas, 1862.

I hope you enjoy seeing the play as much as I have enjoyed directing it.

*Zoë Freedman—Director*



## Cast Biographies



### **Amy Perkis – Amy**

Amy joined LAC in 2019 and is excited to be taking part in her first production with the group! Her previous roles include performing in *The Fairy Queen* at the Oxford Playhouse and translating/assistant-directing a new version of Mikhail Bulgakov's *The White Guard* at the Albion Beatnik Bookshop.



### **Laura Demaude - Beth**

A lifelong theatre lover, Laura has played a variety of characters, including Laura in *Brief Encounter*, Ariel in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and a tree (a role, her teacher remarked, never before played with such passion). After a long hiatus from the stage, she knew it was time to tread the boards again when she discovered LAC's casting call for *Little Women* - one of her favourite stories of all time.



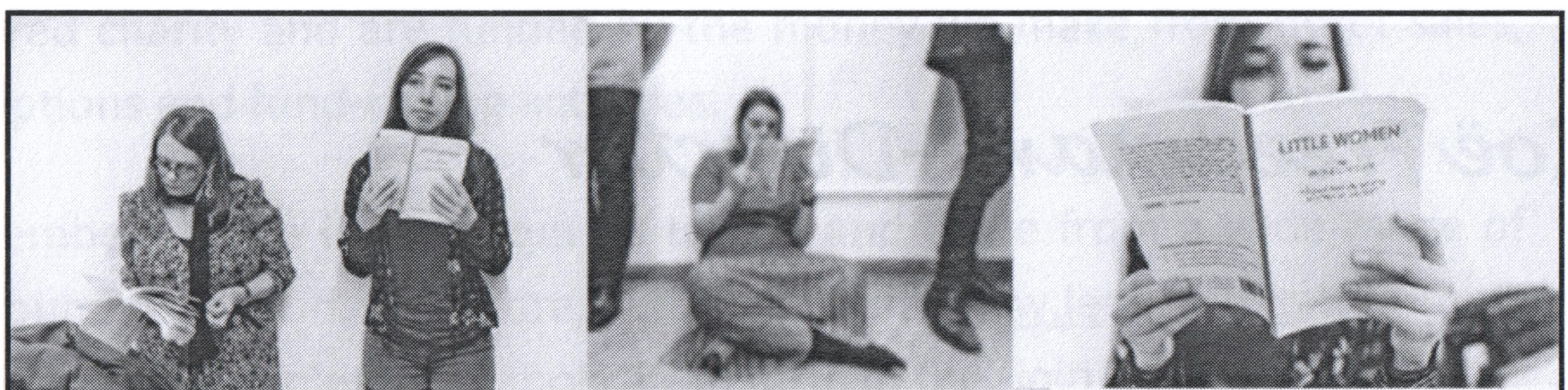
### **Fiona Galloway - Jo**

Fiona has been a member of LAC for eight years, involved both on- and off-stage. Her most recent performances include Guildenstern in *Hamlet*, and the Narrator in *Flint Street Nativity*. Fiona has loved getting to play this iconic character, and discovering that we all have a bit of Jo's spirit!



### **Lizzy Merifield - Meg**

Lizzy has always had a passion for acting. She took part in amateur dramatics in the Yorkshire Dales for seven years, including a role in the first stage performance of *Calendar Girls*. Lizzy took a break to pursue her other passion of nursing. Now a qualified nurse, she was thrilled to become a member of LAC.





## Cast Biographies



### **Carol Bell – Hannah**

Carol has been a member of LAC for several years now and this is the third time that she has been directed by Zoë. Carol is looking forward to playing the role of Hannah even though she doesn't get to wear a pretty dress!



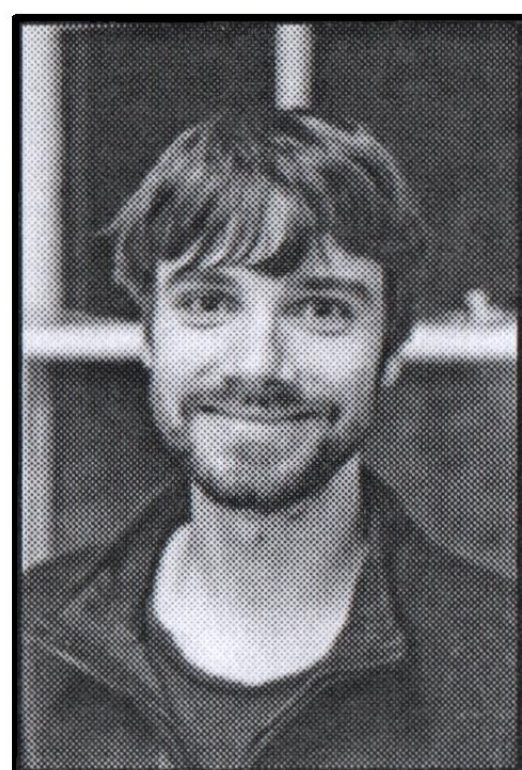
### **Maria Kwater – Marmee**

Maria joined LAC in 2006. She has had several roles with LAC including Meg Boles in *The Birthday Party*; Joyce in *Top Girls* and Aunt Pullet in *The Mill on the Floss*. She has directed *The Dumb Waiter*, *Accrington Pals* and *Sense and Sensibility* and worked backstage in various guises. She loves being Marmee in this play depicting strong women.



### **Maureen Willis – Aunt March**

Since joining LAC in 2012. Maureen has played a variety of roles, most recently Mrs Glegg, the unpleasant aunt, in *The Mill on the Floss*. She is hoping not to become too typecast! When not on stage she enjoys working with the costume team. She also organises LAC's regular play reading evenings.

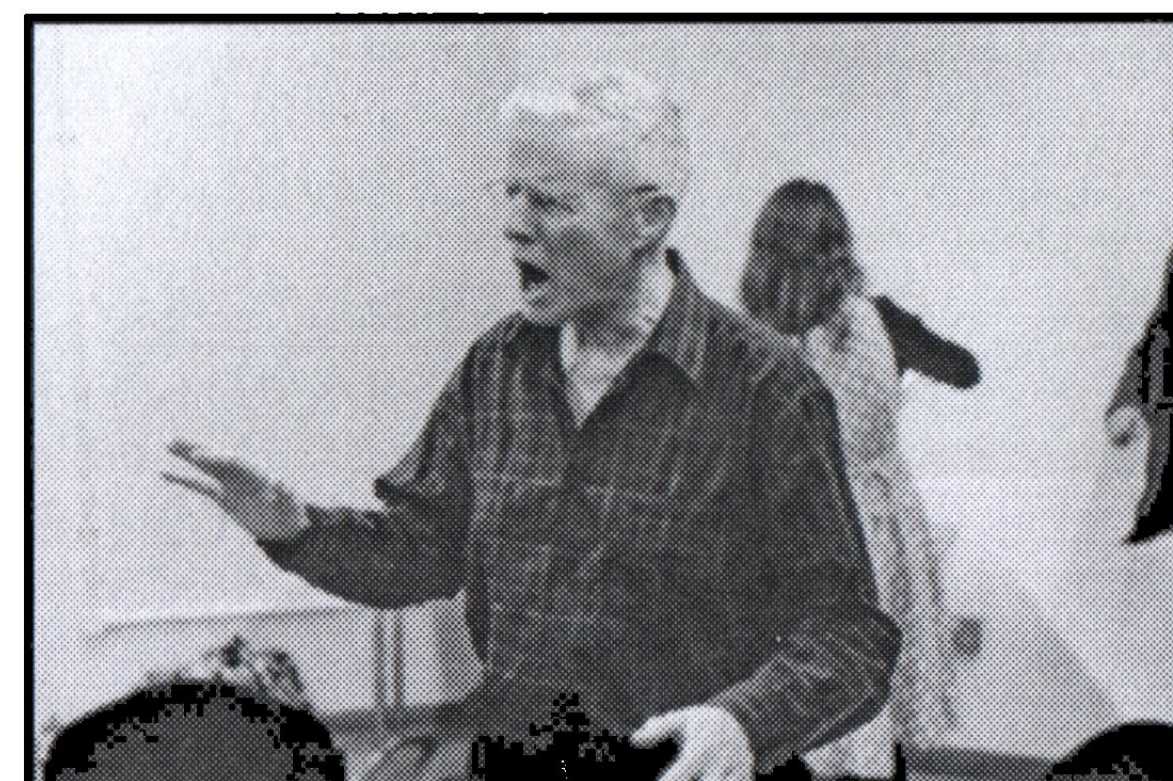


### **Michael Crowe – Laurie**

Michael has performed as part of Oxford University Drama Society, Corpus Christi Owlets and for Tideswell Mummers one memorable spring as a cow! Having returned from the sunny hills of Rome to the less sunny hills of Leeds, he hopes to pursue his love of theatre further with LAC.



Photos: Mark Hillyer  
<https://truenorthuk.com>





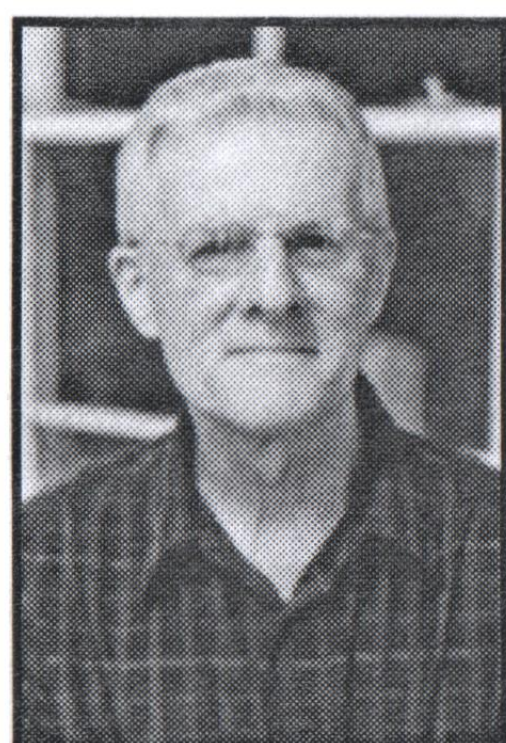


## Cast and Director Biographies



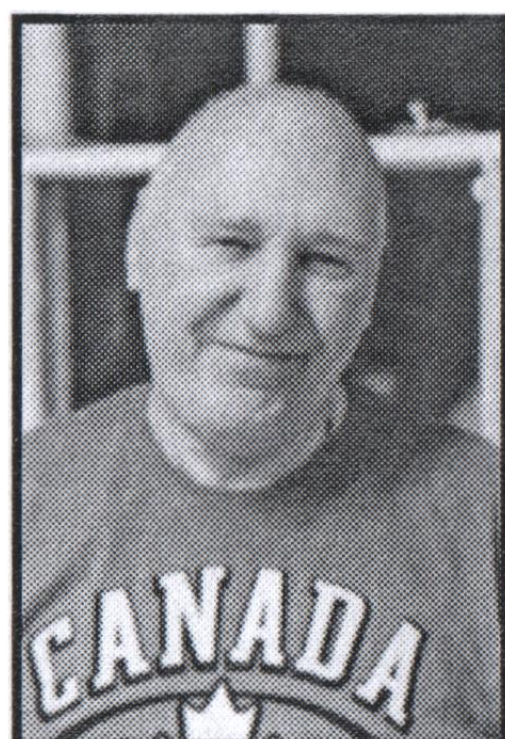
### **Richard Koslowsky – Mr Brooke**

Originally from Leeds, this is Richard's first production with LAC. He trained at London's Royal Central School of Speech and Drama and has worked in both TV/Film and Theatre. After moving back to Leeds, and being impressed with the material LAC produce, Richard joined last year and is looking forward to playing John Brooke in *Little Women*.



### **Howard Russell – Mr Laurence**

Howard is in his third year of acting with LAC. Previous roles have included a Catholic priest, a 7 year-old schoolboy, a retired colonel home from India, and the Lord Chamberlain to the King of Denmark. 'Variety is the spice' being one of his favourite maxims, he now moves on to play an orphan's grandfather in New England during the American Civil War.



### **Ken Taylor – Mr March**

A member since 2012, Ken is currently Chair of LAC. He has been acting and directing in theatre for 40 years, and is currently working professionally as an actor, director and producer in theatre and film, and as a writer.



### **Zoë Freedman - Director**

Zoë has been acting since childhood, with Playcraft in Canterbury. She joined LAC in 2004 and has acted in several productions, including *Billy Liar*, *A Country Wife*, *The Comedy of Errors* and *Sense and Sensibility*. Zoë's directorial debut for LAC was NF Simpson's *A Resounding Tinkle*, followed by *The Price* by Arthur Miller, *Top Girls* by Caryl Churchill and *Steel Magnolias* by Robert Harling. Zoë would like to dedicate this production to her 'Marmee', her sister and her soul sisters.





## Thoughts from the Director

I was first introduced to the novel of *Little Women* at the age of ten, by my Mum, whose favourite book this is. I have read it so many times since, that when I came to re-read the book prior to starting rehearsals, I found that my copy was falling apart! It is hard to explain why I love it so much - maybe it's the strong female characters, or the exploration of how women cope without the 'man of the house', or that the sisters are so rounded and well written that I can relate to them all. Whatever the reason, I find something new each time I read it.

As I love the book so much and enjoy directing plays with interesting female characters, I wondered if there was a stage adaptation and discovered many. I chose the Peter Clapham adaptation for a number of reasons - it recounts the story of only the first book in the *Little Women* series and has a nice symmetry, both beginning and ending at Christmas. It is also easy to stage, with all the action taking place in the March family home, so no need to re-create a frozen lake, theatre or ballroom!

Some people who have read the book or seen other adaptations may be disappointed that their favourite scene isn't included in this version, and for this I apologise! As this play covers just the first book, no-one gets married, and no-one dies – that all takes place in 'Good Wives' which I encourage you to read. If you're especially hooked, you could follow this up with Jo's Boys and Little Men too!

## The Plot

The play is set in New England, Civil War America, between the Christmases of 1861 and 1862.

The four March sisters and their 'Marmee', together with their long-suffering, faithful maid Hannah, learn to cope with life, love, near-death illness and sibling rivalries whilst their Father is away working as a minister with the troops.







## Cast

(in order of appearance)

Amy

Amy Perkis

Beth

Laura Demaude

Jo

Fiona Galloway

Meg

Lizzy Merifield

Hannah

Carol Bell

Marmee

Maria Kwater

Aunt March

Maureen Willis

Laurie

Michael Crowe

Mr Brooke

Richard Koslowsky

Mr Laurence

Howard Russell

Mr March

Ken Taylor



Photos: Mark Hillyer - <https://truenorthuk.com>





## **Production Team**

Director	Zoë Freedman
Production Manager	Alan Buttery
Stage Manager	Camilla Asher
Set design	Zoë Freedman
Set construction	Alan Buttery and Ken Taylor
Properties	Pam Wilson, Chloe Potter, Addy Durrani, Trish McGough
Costume	Lena Gazey, Margaret Savage Rachel Vernelle, Kathryn Francis
Sound operation	Steve Fryatt
Lighting design	Peter Waddicor
Lighting operation	Carriageworks technical staff
Rehearsal prompt	Junyi Chew
Accent coach	Tony Macaluso
Piano music: playing	Katie Simpson
Piano music: recording	Daniel Asher
Publicity artwork	Mitchell Perry
Publicity photography	Mark Hillyer, Junyi Chew
Music consultant	Genny Freedman
Publicity	Jenny Carter, LAC publicity team
Programme production	Maria Kwater, Rich Francis
Front of House	LAC members

This production makes use of the following sounds from [freesound.org](https://freesound.org): "Bell 2" by temawas, "Door Slam" by FunWithSound, "Door, Front, Opening, A" by InspectorJ, "Door, Wooden, Close, A (H1)" by InspectorJ, "grandfatherclockchime12oclock" by morgantj and "Horse-drawn carriage - Approach and stop" by Sirderf

**There is an interval of 15 minutes**

**Video and/or audio recording of this performance by any means is strictly prohibited**



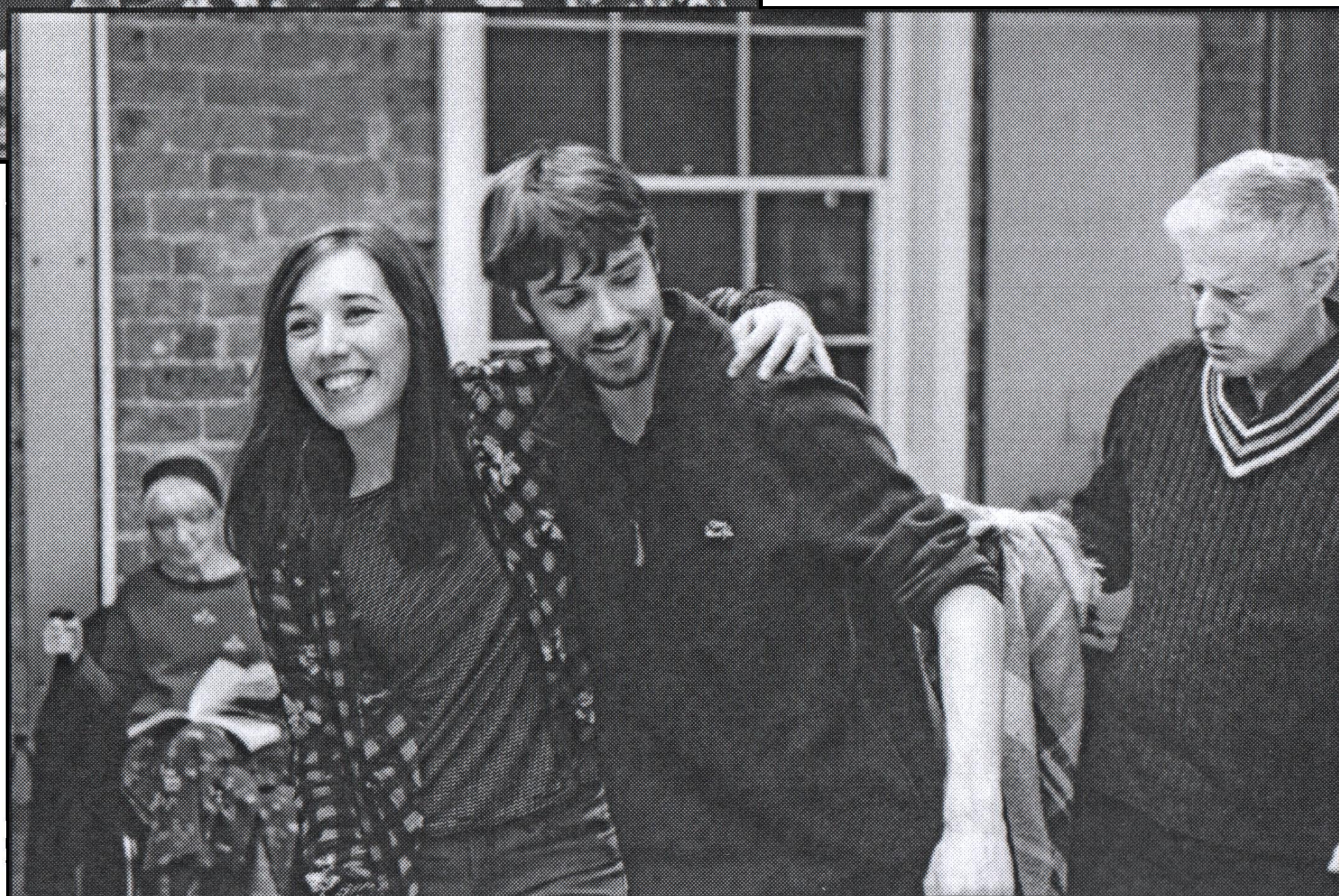


## About the Author - Louisa May Alcott

Louisa May Alcott was born in 1832. Her father was the Transcendentalist teacher Bronson Alcott, whose friends included Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. Louisa published her first stories aged 19 and the income from these helped support her family. Little Women, published in 1869 was a great success on its first publication. Louisa worked as a teacher and a nurse and was a vigorous campaigner for women's rights. She died in 1888.

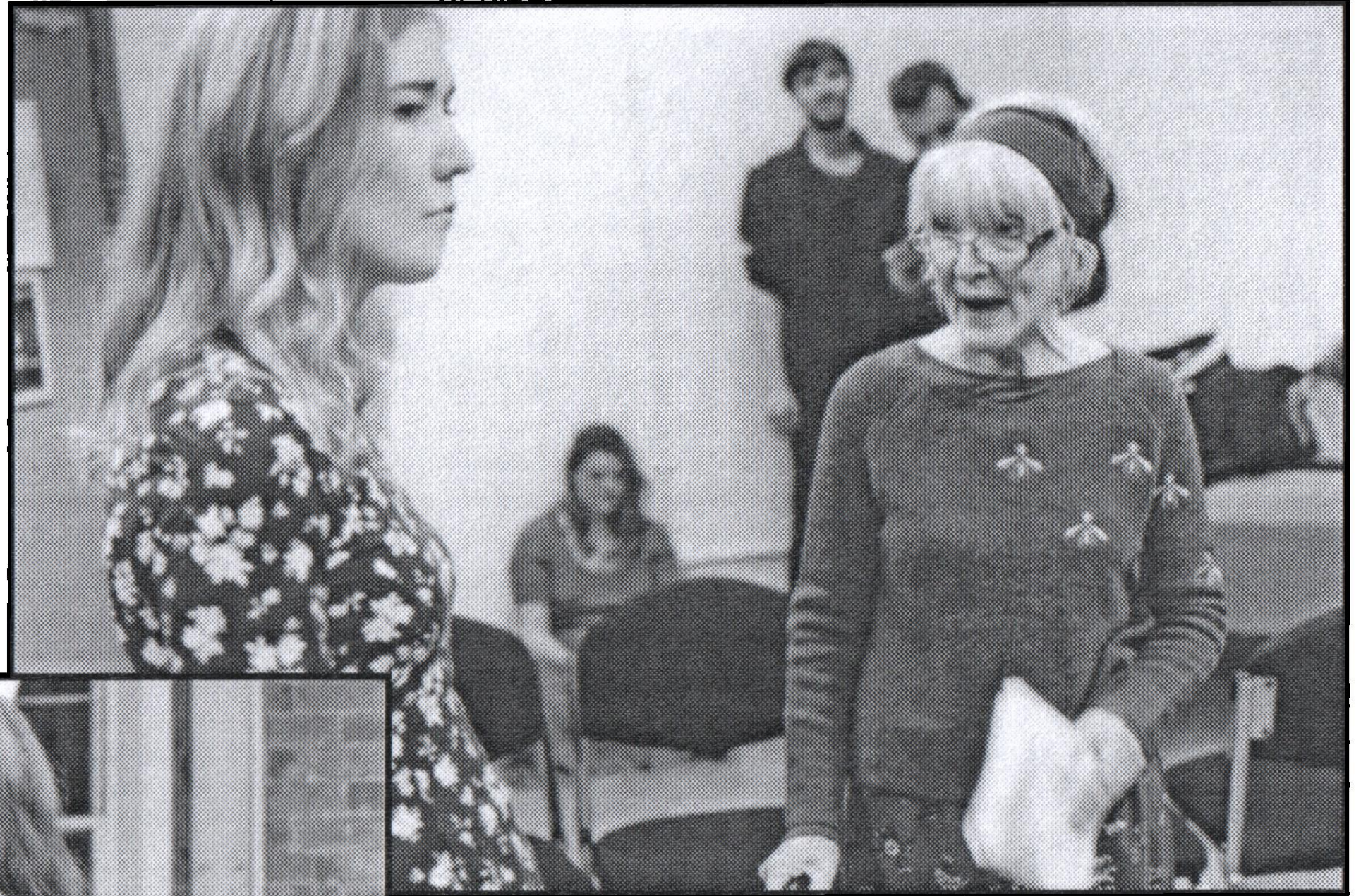


Photos: Mark Hillyer -  
<https://truenorthuk.com>





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<https://truenorthuk.com>



## Historical context

The American Civil War (1861 to 1865), fought between the northern and southern United States, began primarily over the long-standing controversy over the enslavement of black people. The Confederate states in the south wished to uphold slavery, the northern states wanted to abolish it.

The war ended when General Robert E. Lee surrendered to General Ulysses S. Grant at the Battle of Appomattox Court House. Much of the South's infrastructure was destroyed, especially transportation systems. The Confederacy collapsed and slavery was abolished. Four million black slaves were freed, with Constitutional amendments and federal legislation granting civil and political rights to freed slaves.





Photos: Mark Hillyer -  
<https://truenorthuk.com>





## Leeds Arts Centre Costume Hire

LAC 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

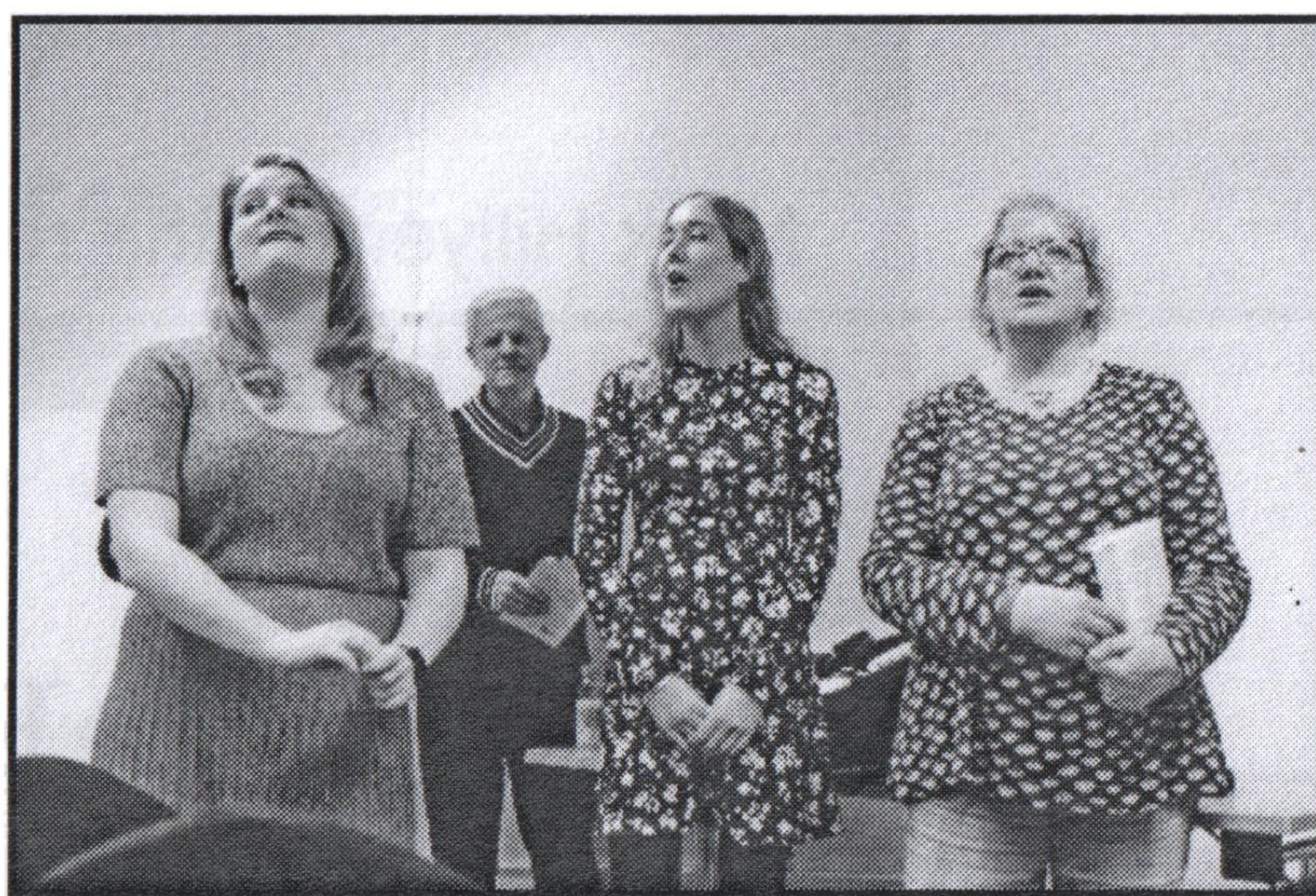


Photo: Mark Hillyer - <https://truenorthuk.com>

For more information, see [www.leedsartscentre.org.uk/costume-hire](http://www.leedsartscentre.org.uk/costume-hire)

## Keep in touch!

To keep up with all the latest Leeds Arts Centre news follow us on:



[http://www.facebook.com/groups/  
LeedsArtsCentre/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/LeedsArtsCentre/)



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Visit [www.leedsartscentre.org.uk/](http://www.leedsartscentre.org.uk/)





**LAC would like to thank.....**



Mark Hillyer for the rehearsal photographs

<https://truenorthuk.com>

**Lewis Francis Blackburn Bray**  
———— solicitors ————

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[www.lfbbsolicitors.co.uk](http://www.lfbbsolicitors.co.uk)

Lewis Francis Blackburn Bray for printing the programmes



**Phil Dodgson & Partners Ltd**

Pavilion Business Centre, Leeds, LS28 6NB

0113 255 7406

Phil Dodgson & Partners for the preparation of LAC's annual accounts



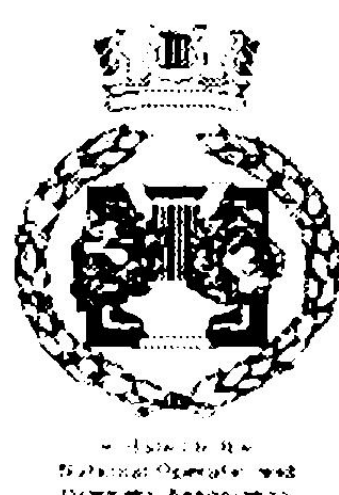


**Leeds Community Arts Network - (LCAN)** comprises community drama, music, opera, youth theatre and other arts societies, mainly performing at The Carriageworks, working with Leeds City Council and the Carriageworks. LCAN welcomes everyone - from old hands to complete novices. You could try treading the boards, or have the thrill of being backstage! See <http://www.leedscan.org.uk/>

LCAN member societies are: Cosmopolitan Players; Leeds Amateur Operatic Society; Leeds Arts Centre; Leeds Children's Theatre; Leeds Gilbert & Sullivan Society; LIDOS; Leeds Writers' Circle; Leeds Youth Opera; Northern Youth Theatre Company; Our Community Dances; S.T.A.R.S and St. Mary's Youth Theatre.

### Upcoming LCAN shows:

 <p>Agatha Crusty and The Pantomime Murders</p>	<p><b>Agatha Crusty and the Pantomime Murders</b></p> <p><b>Cosmopolitan Players</b></p> <p><b>26 to 29 Feb 2020</b></p> <p><u>Carriageworks main auditorium</u></p>
<p><b>Fantastic Mr Fox</b></p> <p><b>Leeds Children's Theatre</b></p> <p><b>18 to 21 March 2020</b></p> <p><u>Carriageworks main auditorium</u></p>	 <p><b>Fantastic Mr. Fox</b></p>



Leeds Arts Centre are members of the National Operatic and Dramatic Association (NODA), founded in 1899 – the leading representative for amateur theatre in the UK. See [www.noda.org.uk](http://www.noda.org.uk)





## Leeds Arts Centre's forthcoming productions:

### **The Father by Florian Zeller**

**Translated by Christopher Hampton, directed by  
Rich Francis**

**Thurs 30 April to Sat 02 May 2020**

André is 80 years old and was once a tap dancer. He lives with his daughter Anne and her husband Antoine. Or was he an engineer whose daughter Anne lives in London with her new lover, Pierre? The thing is, he is still wearing his pyjamas, and he can't find his watch. This is a beautiful study of a man descending into dementia and we join him on his journey. It is both funny and heart-breaking.



### **Dinner by Moira Buffini**

**Directed by Camilla Asher**

**Weds 01 to Sat 04 July 2020**

#### ***The trivial pursuit of the dinner party from hell...***

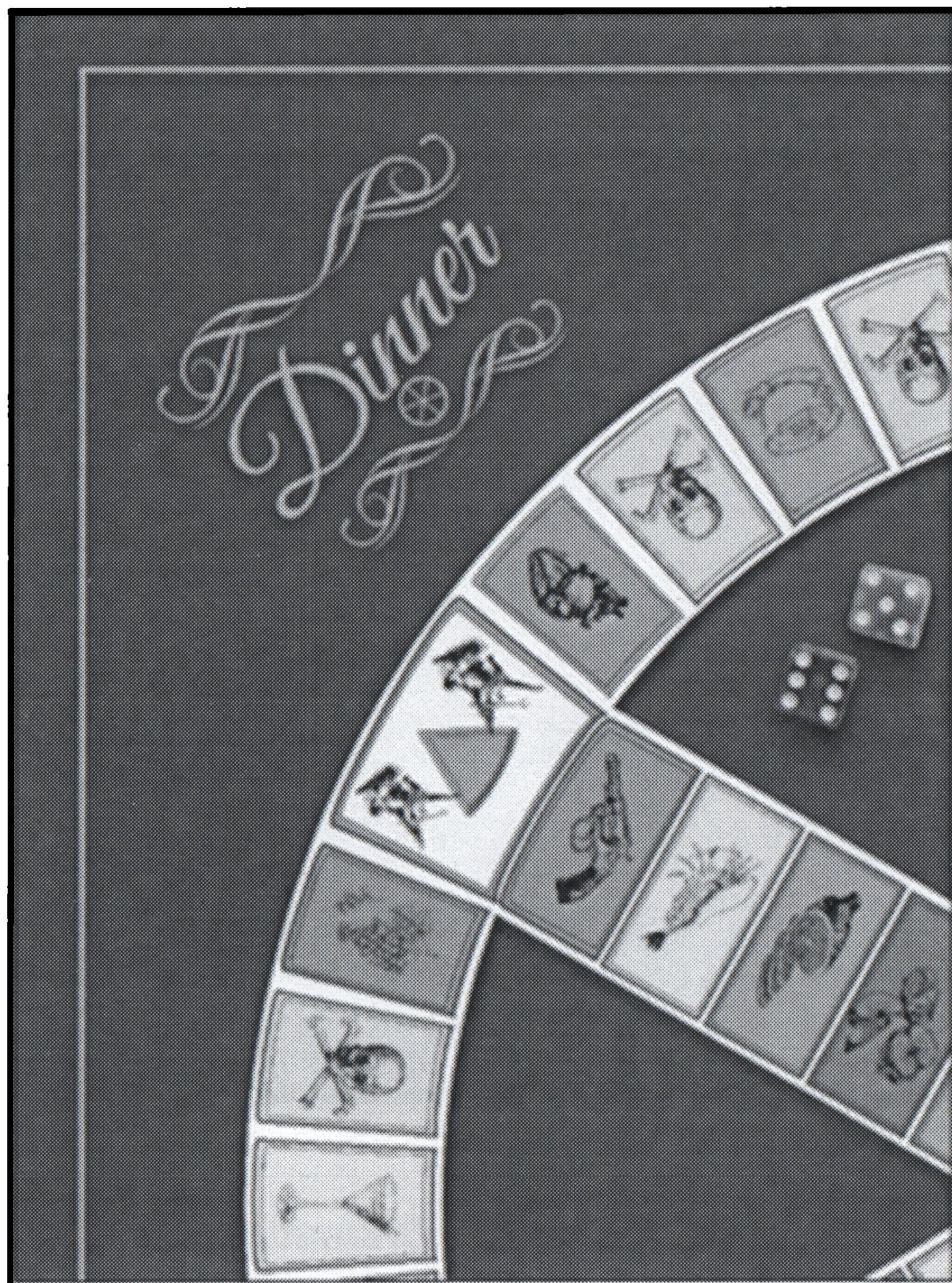
In one evening's entertainment 'Dinner' has it all! Love, laughter, revenge, an eclectic guest list, an unexpected visitor, a mysterious waiter, an outrageous menu and copious amounts of alcohol, not to mention discussions on art and literature, science and nature, and entertainment and politics.

Buffini's delicious satirical black comedy will keep you on the edge of your seat. As the dinner party deteriorates, comments are thrown round the dinner table like poisonous darts and worse.

**Auditions - Mon 9 and Tues 10 March**

**Pre-audition play reading - Weds 4 March.**

See [www.leedsartscentre.org.uk/](http://www.leedsartscentre.org.uk/) or email  
[info@leedsartscentre.org.uk](mailto:info@leedsartscentre.org.uk)



**Tickets available from the Town Hall City Centre Box Office, or at  
[www.leedstownhall.co.uk/how-to-book/](http://www.leedstownhall.co.uk/how-to-book/), or by calling 0113 376 0318**