

The Civic Theatre Leeds



Programme

. . . why not

join the

THEATRE CLUB?



NOW!!

The Beggar's Opera

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA was first presented in 1728. It is said that it has been performed more times than any play in the English language since Shakespeare.

Originally based on an idea by Swift, who remarked that "a Newgate Pastoral might make an odd pretty sort of a thing," it was intended both as a satire on the general corruption of politics at the time (Macheath being Sir Robert Walpole) and a satire on the then fashionable Italian Opera. It also started the vogue for ballad operas.

John Gay's original idea was that the play should be completely unaccompanied and it was only towards the end of rehearsals that the theatre management was persuaded that instrumental music should be added. Dr. John Christian Pepusch was hastily called in to supply an overture and accompaniments to the songs. In the first edition of the music (1729) the songs are provided with only the very simplest of basses.

The popularity of the play continued until the end of the nineteenth century, when it suffered an eclipse. In 1920 Nigel Playfair revived it at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, with much more ambitious scoring by Frederick Austin. It ran for almost three years.

Since then, we have had Benjamin Britten's version which completes the BEGGAR'S transformation.

The version we have selected is by Edward J. Dent, because this accompaniment suits our own interpretation of the work. We do not see THE BEGGAR'S OPERA as an opera with some spoken words; we see it as a play with songs.

All the songs are popular ballads of the period. Gay was no musician; he simply selected the tunes he knew for his own purpose. Many of the songs are easily recognisable today, many are unfamiliar to us.

This is Leeds Arts Centre's twenty-first birthday production. We selected THE BEGGAR'S OPERA for several reasons—not the least of which was the challenge it presented. We chose it because it is a play about the theatre. It makes no pretence to be naturalistic. The Introduction tells us we are watching a play and throughout it pokes fun at the theatre and theatrical convention. It also gives us an opportunity to poke a little harmless fun at our own theatre.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA by John Gay, was first presented by John Rich. It was said that it made Gay rich and Rich gay.

Said Queensberry;— "This is a very odd thing; I am satisfied that it is either a very good thing or a very bad thing."

Said Congreve:— "It will either take greatly, or be damned confoundedly."



LEEDS ARTS CENTRE

presents

DECEMBER 7th to 17th, 1966

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

By JOHN GAY

CAST

PEACHUM		JACK CLARKE
LOCKIT		EDWARD LAKELAND
MACHEATH		JACK LEWIS
MAT OF THE MINT	} Macheath's Gang	ERIC PARKER
BEN BUDGE		JAMES J. BOYER
JEMMY TWITCHER		BILL ROGERSON
CROOK FINGERED JACK		PAUL VAYRO
WAT DREARY		STUART MARSHALL
HARRY PADDINGTON		ALEX SIMPSON
NIMMING NED		PHILIP STEAD
BEGGAR		
PLAYER		GERALD ARMYTAGÉ
MRS. PEACHUM		MAUREEN RUTTER
POLLY PEACHUM		GWEN HART
LUCY LOCKIT		JOSEPHINE WARD
DIANA TRAPES		MARY SMITH
MRS. COAXER	} Women of the Town	PAT APPLESON
DOLLY TRULL		JEAN BLUNDELL
MRS. VIXEN		MONICA SHELDON
BETTY DOXY		CHRISTINE WILSON
JENNY DIVER		JOAN MILBOURNE
MRS. SLAMMEKIN		BETTY TRIGGS
MOLLY BRAZEN		JUNE STONEHOUSE

The play takes place at Peachum's house, at a tavern near Newgate and in Newgate Prison.

DIRECTED BY SYDNEY IRVING

Set designed by **HAZEL IRVING**

Costumes and Lighting designed by **GERALD ARMYTAGE**

Pianist: **JOHN HOOLEY**

Stage Manager: **BILL ROGERSON**

Wardrobe: **LESLEY NORTON** and the Centre Wardrobe

Prompter: **CHRISTINE DALTON**

Lighting: **PAT CLARK**

Properties: **CHRISTINE LASKEY, PAT CLARK**

Set constructed and painted by: **FRED MOWER**

Box Office: **HAZEL IRVING, JOHN PEMBERTON**

Front of House Manager: **GEORGE WESTMORELAND**

CIVIC THEATRE, Cookridge Street, Leeds

Manager: Derek Rose

**In accordance with the requirements of the Watch 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 obstruction.
- (c) The safety curtain must be lowered and raised once immediately before the commencement of each performance so as to ensure its being in proper working order.

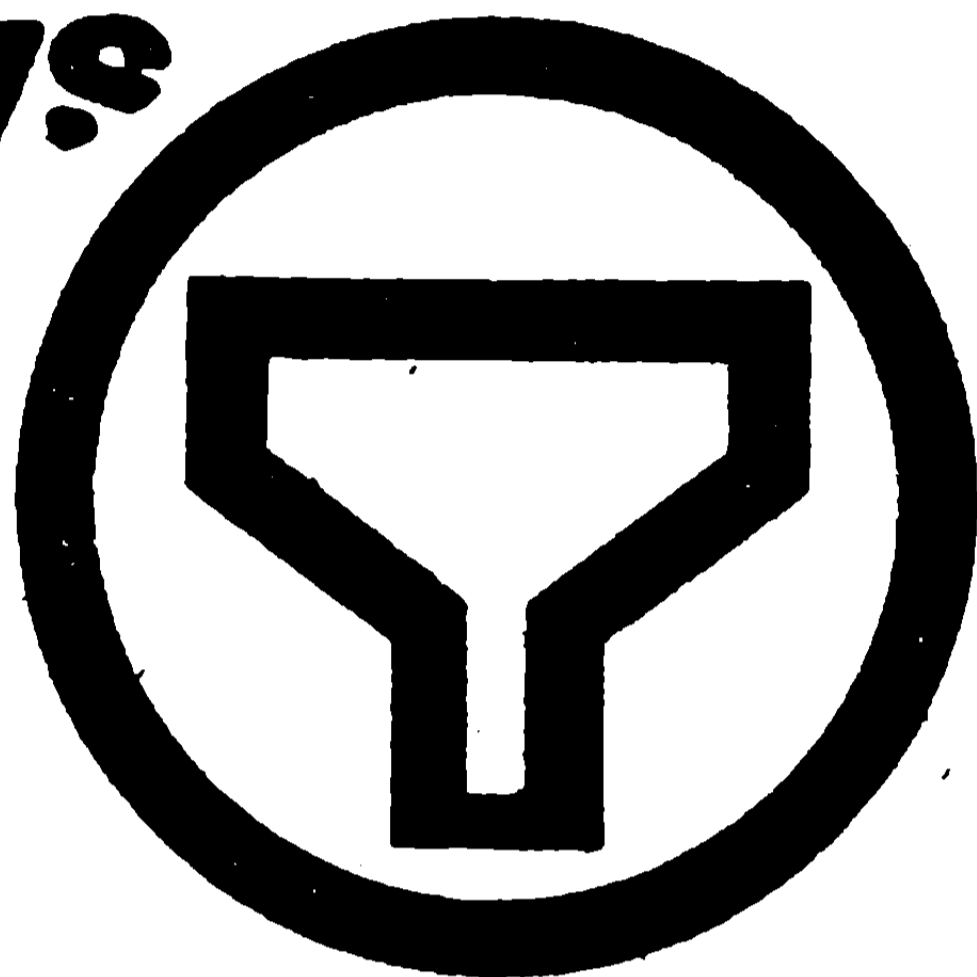
In 1945, after an exchange of letters appearing in THE YORKSHIRE POST and public meetings, Leeds Arts Centre was created to fill a long-felt need in the city. Our first permanent home was at Portland House (standing in the part of Portland Crescent which is now a car park) and those of you who ever attended any of our activities there will remember the happy, chaotic, almost derelict atmosphere of the place. In the restricted space at our disposal, we managed to create an attic theatre, complete with lighting equipment, scenery and dressing rooms. We also had a wardrobe store, a property store, a scenery store, workshops for building and painting scenery, rehearsal rooms, a lounge and coffee bar and an office.

When Portland House was pulled down (only a short time before it would, inevitably, have fallen down) we moved to our present home, 43 Cookridge Street. Now we hear that we are to move again. In June we are to take up residence lower down Cookridge Street, when our present home will, once again, become a car park.

During the past twenty-one years our aims have never altered. We have always provided the environment for those with an appreciation for the Arts (active or passive) where members can meet in an informal manner. We have a Drama Group, a Fine Arts Group, a Music Group and a Film Group. One subscription covers membership of all groups. We are always happy to welcome new members. You don't have to be madly active—you can come along as often or as seldom as you like, you will still be welcome. A note to The Secretary, Leeds Arts Centre, 43 Cookridge Street, Leeds 1 will bring you full details, or you can leave your address at the box-office tonight. If you join us soon, you can help us to move in June.

Our next production : February 15th—25th, AS YOU LIKE IT.

**Better
Bottled
by Brind
leys**



*Keep fit—
keep slim*

BECOME A "REGULAR"
AT ONE OF THE NINE

*Leeds
Swimming Baths*

Barkers

HAVE A GIFT FOR MUSIC



R. BARKER & CO. LIMITED

4-9 ALBION PLACE
LEEDS 1

Visit the

ABBNEY HOUSE MUSEUM KIRKSTALL

As well as conventional galleries housing collections of folk material illustrating Yorkshire urban life, the Museum contains three full-scale streets of 19th century shops, houses and workshops

TURNBULLS

(REMOVALS) LTD.

REMOVAL and STORAGE CONTRACTORS

HOME AND OVERSEAS REMOVALS
Free Inclusive Estimates
EXCELLENT STORAGE FACILITIES

Head Office:

**287 ROUNDHAY ROAD
LEEDS 8.**

Branch Office:

5 OLDFIELD LANE, LEEDS 12
Phone: 639208

With Compliments . . .

THE WILKINSON BUILDING CO. (LEEDS) LIMITED



MILLET

PRINTERS

TICKETS
POSTERS
PROGRAMMES



Specialists in
Civic Theatre Work

2 Atkinson Street, Leeds 10
Tel. 23488

the kitchen

airedale house
albion street
leeds 1

*kitchen boutique
restaurant for quick
quality luncheons, coffee,
tea*

home catering for parties
large and small