

GARRICK
ensemble

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME



Monday 3 –
Sunday 9
February 2025

altrincham
garrick
playhouse

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Hello and Welcome

... to **Altrincham Garrick Playhouse**, and the Garrick Ensemble's production of Simon Stephens' "brilliant, deep and funny adaptation" (The Times) of Mark Haddon's best-selling novel.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time is a play about family, honesty, resilience, challenge and communication, and chronicles a young boy's journey of discovery.

The initial structure of the play imitates a murder mystery, as Christopher John Francis Boone tries to solve the murder of his neighbour's dog, Wellington. It then takes on the form of a personal journey or quest. Christopher must overcome challenges on his journey from Swindon to London – some of which may appear very ordinary to an audience, but when seen through his eyes, they engage in the difficulties he has in processing the world.

Wrapped around this narrative is the play within a play structure. This is evident in the narration from Christopher's book, mostly performed by his mentor, Siobhan. She decides it would be a good idea if Christopher were to write down his experiences of finding this dead dog. He decides to write a book, and she reads from it in the form of a narrator – and he does as well. The various characters that he meets and writes about come alive, and are played by members of the company.

While Christopher's response to events is often very sensual and overwhelming for him, the distancing effect of the 'play within a play' structure enables the audience to take a breath and process the emotions or action – something we see Christopher cannot do in his experience of the world. It therefore has the effect of developing empathy and – hopefully – an understanding of his condition.

The action in this play has to be incredibly agile: you have to imagine you are in a street one minute, and then in school the next, and sometimes swim in Christopher's imagination. So if Christopher decides that he wants to be an astronaut and he is going to be weightless, then as an audience you have to believe that he is an astronaut and is weightless.

Mark Haddon described his story as having "...a very simple surface, but there are layers of irony and paradox all the way through..."

Creating that simple surface for this production has been a complex journey filled with a matrix of decisions. While in the National Theatre world première it took well over a year to engineer the production that garnered their well-deserved accolades, I am amazed at what this ensemble of actors and creatives have achieved in only a few short weeks. My sincere gratitude goes to all involved.

This beautiful story has taken us all on a world of discovery – of what it means to be on the spectrum, of what it takes for parents to parent, and of what it means for neurotypical people to understand what it is to be on the spectrum.

I am particularly pleased to have been able to link up with **I AM Autism**, a long-established local charity which has been empowering the Autistic community of Greater Manchester for over 50 years. Their aim is to be the main developer and provider of support services for people with autism, with the knowledge, experience and passion to help individuals and families work through them towards a happier place with autism as a part of their daily lives. More information can be found at their website, www.i-am-autism.org.uk



Many thanks for supporting us, have a safe journey home afterwards, and we look forward to welcoming you back here very soon!

Joe **Joseph Meighan**
Artistic Director, Altrincham Garrick Playhouse.

**altrincham
garrick
playhouse**

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The Curious Incident's

Writer **Mark Haddon** talks about the origins of Christopher in his novel, and his regrets at the labelling of

I've always regretted that the phrase 'Asperger Syndrome' appeared on the cover of *Curious Incident* when it was first published. Mostly because the central conceit was that Christopher himself had written the book (for a long time it had the dull but accurate working title, Christopher's Book) and 'Asperger Syndrome' is not a phrase he uses. In the book he refers to himself only as 'someone who has Behavioural Problems'.

I prefer the wry humour in those words. I like the way it gently mocks diagnostic medical language. I like the way it includes all of us (who doesn't have behavioural problems?). But I like it most of all because it is Christopher's own phrase. Labels tell us very little about the person who has been labelled and a lot about the people doing the labelling. If you want to find out who someone is, just ask them.

In the early eighties I spent several months working at an Adult Training Centre in North London. There was a great deal of discussion at the time about the language used to describe people who had what were

coming to be known as learning difficulties but were more widely known as mental handicaps. The adults who attended the centre nine-to-five, Monday to Friday, were known as 'trainees' despite the fact that they were trained to do very little, so the staff were keen to replace the word. When asked for his opinion,

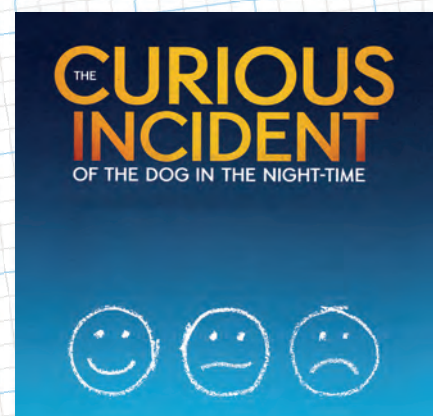
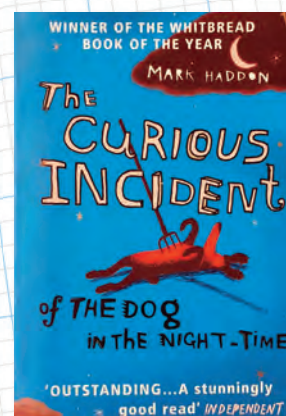
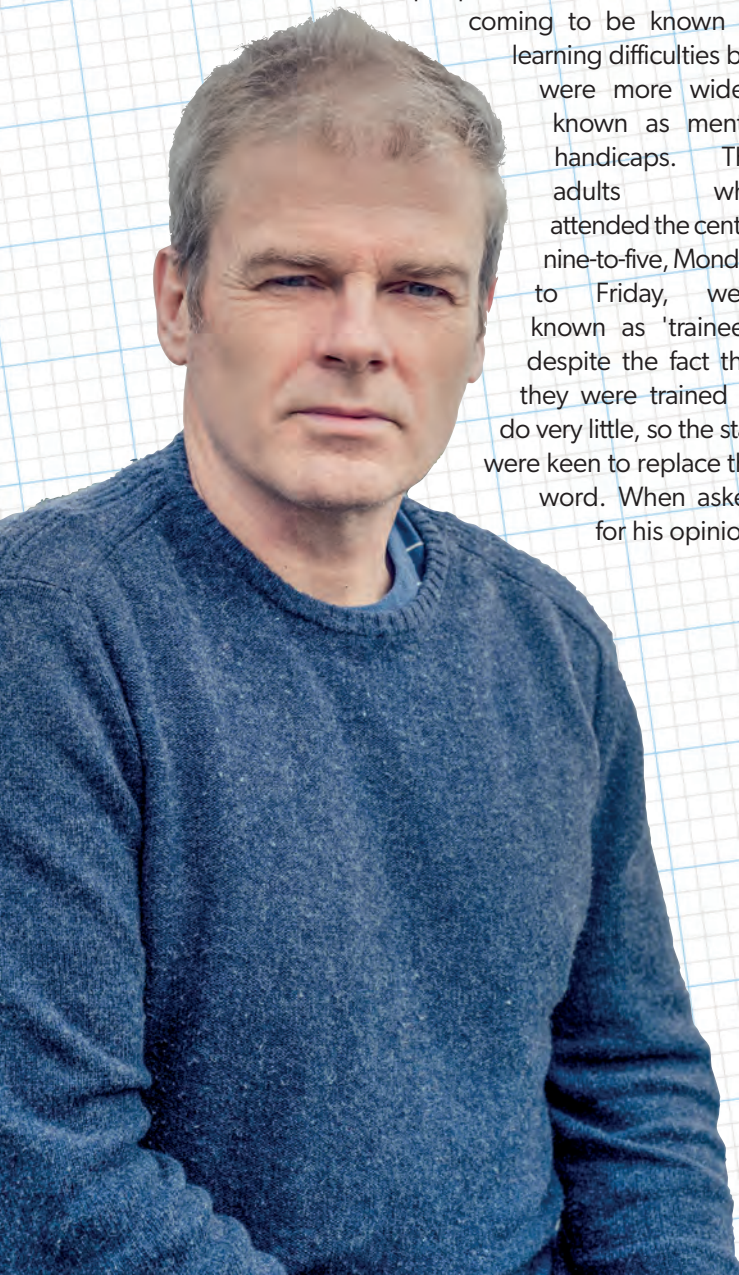
a middle-aged trainee called Clive said, dryly, "I think we should be called *The Obedient Dogs*". His suggestion comes back to me every time I hear well-intentioned people searching for the appropriate PC language. Clive is probably called a 'client' now.

One of the other reasons I regret the words 'Asperger Syndrome' appearing on the original cover of *Curious Incident* is that it sparked a sometimes heated and often misguided debate which rumbles on quietly to this day. In short, is Christopher a correct representation of someone with the condition? The assumption being that there is indeed a correct representation of someone with the condition. I think it's indicative of the way we think about people we label 'disabled' that we can even ask this question. We would never ask if a character in a novel was a correct representation of a cellist or a lesbian or an archbishop. There is no such thing. And the same is true for people who are given the label 'disabled'. They are as various and individual as any other group in society.

Does Christopher seem real? That's the question you should ask. That's the question you should ask of any character in any book. Does he seem rich and layered and believable or does he feel like a lazy arrangement of words on the page? I'm happy for readers to answer 'No', just so long as we agree on the question.

As it happens, when I was putting Christopher together I drew upon a long list of beliefs, habits, quirks and behaviours which I borrowed from friends and acquaintances and members of my own family. It would be unfair of me to name the person who can't eat a plate of food if the broccoli and the salmon are touching, or the person who can't use a toilet if a stranger has used it. Suffice to say that neither of them would be labelled as having a disability. Which is only to say that Christopher is not that different from the rest of us. It's the number and combination of his eccentricities which cause him difficulties.

For the record, I have been – and continue to be – immensely touched by the letters I get from readers of the novel. Some write to say that their mother or father or brother or sister didn't really understand them until they got them to read *Curious*. Others write saying that they didn't really understand their mother or father or brother or sister until they themselves read *Curious* (most, of course, write to me to disagree with Christopher's explanation of the Monty Hall problem). Though it makes me sad, too, that it took



Origins...

'Aspergers' – which wouldn't be permitted today.

a work of fiction to open a door you would hope people could have opened themselves with persistence and a little imagination.

For the record I'm also hugely flattered that the book has become a set text for schoolchildren around the world. What writer doesn't want more and more readers reading their work that closely?

But I'm a little uneasy when, as occasionally happens, it is used as a textbook, and handed to policemen or social workers to give them some insight into the behaviour of people they might come across in their professional lives.

I'm in favour of anything that introduces a little more empathy into the world, but I'd like to fight the corner for *Curious* simply as a novel. Of course it's about disability and our attitudes towards it, but it's about many other things as well: mathematics, families, space, death, loyalty, maps, Sherlock Holmes, truth, bravery, Swindon, railways ...

It's also a novel about the act of reading. It contains huge gaps that readers fill without noticing. Christopher, for example, never says what he looks like, the clothes he wears, the way his hair is cut, whether he is skinny or fat, tall or short. In spite of this most readers have a vivid image of him. And this, I suspect, is one of the reasons why so many of them feel a peculiar sense of ownership about the book, for when they close the final page they have had an experience which is, to a large extent, of their own making.

Christopher is an outsider, and novelists are drawn to outsiders of all kinds - Robinson Crusoe, Raskolnikov, Holden Caulfield, Jane Eyre, Benjy Compson... – because they grant us a privileged position from which we are able to look back at ourselves.

If I was being particularly contentious I might say that *Curious* is not really about Christopher at all. It's about us.

Mark Haddon

This article was originally written in June 2012, and first published in the National Theatre's Programme for their production of "The Curious Incident...". It is reproduced here by kind permission.

The term 'Asperger Syndrome' is no longer used to describe a character like Christopher. To find out why, turn to page 14...

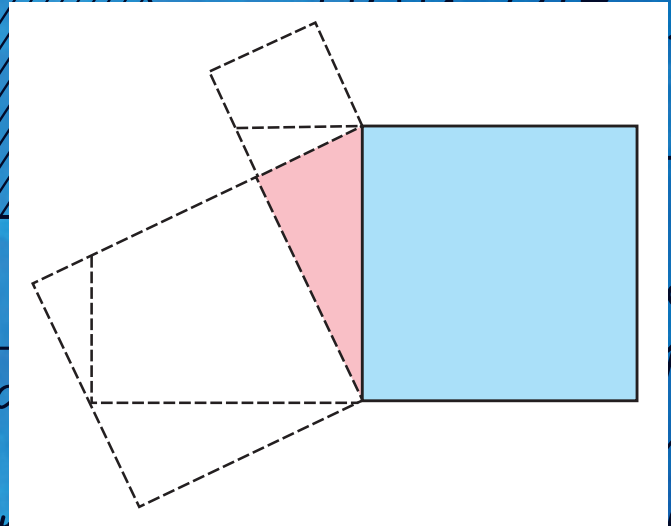
The Pythagoras Theorem

"The square on the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is the sum of the squares on the other two sides".

Every schoolchild learns the statement of this ancient theorem but what does it mean and why is it true?

A right-angled triangle has one angle equal to 90 degrees.

If you place three squares on the sides of the triangle, then add up the area of the two small squares it's equal to the area of the biggest square. Here is a proof by jigsaw puzzle:



Draw this out on a larger piece of paper, and then cut along the dotted lines. The challenge is to rearrange the pieces to form a jigsaw filling the other, blue-shaded, square. You will not need the central pink triangle.

The solution is at the back of this programme on page 15.

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

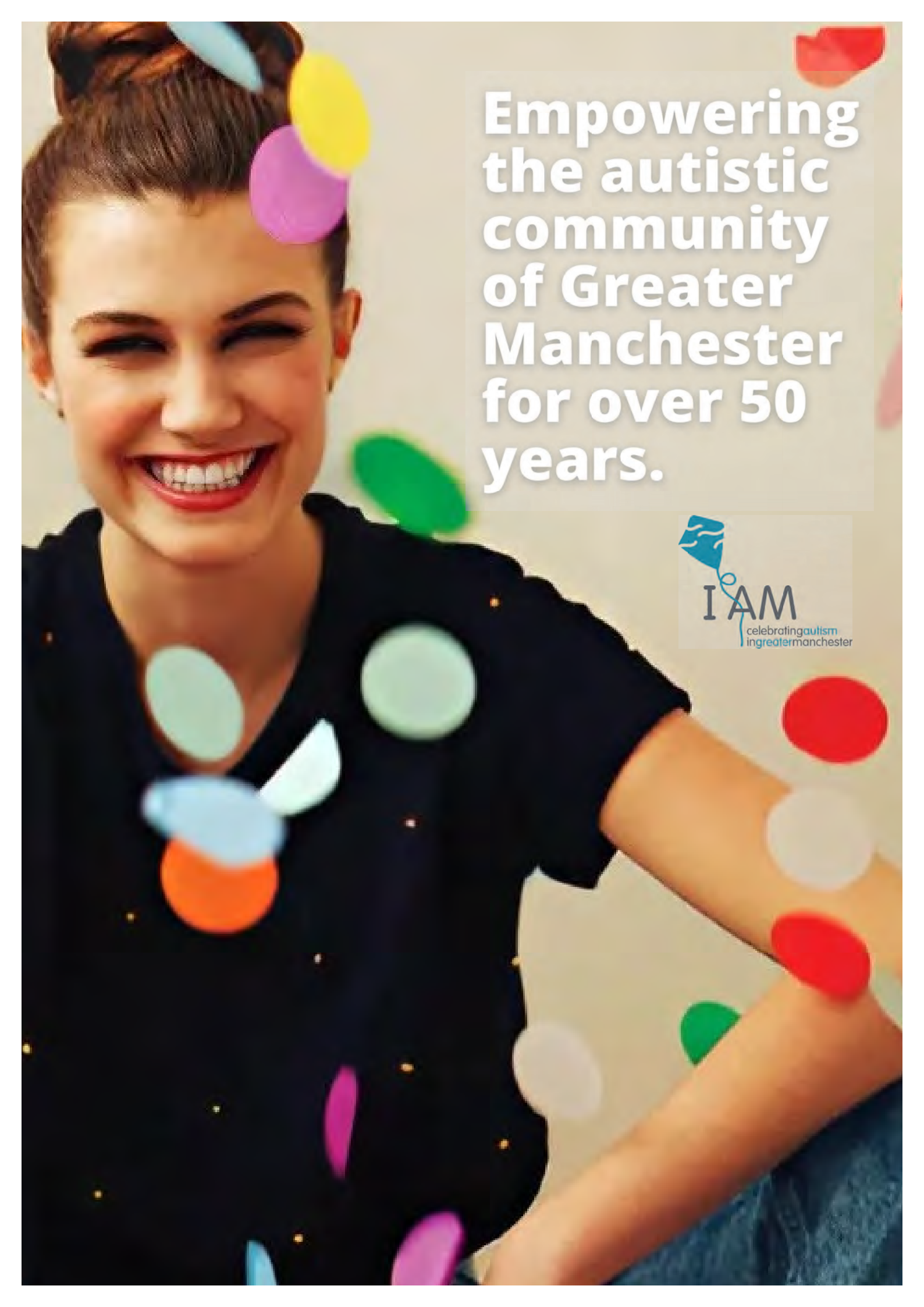
We value your feedback, and would like to invite you to share your thoughts about the Altrincham Garrick Playhouse. Have you enjoyed a recent performance, or didn't enjoy it for some reason? Perhaps there's something we could improve on? Are there specific plays, musicals, or shows you'd love to see on our stage? Any visiting acts you'd like to recommend? What do you think of this programme? How did you find out about what you came to see? We would love to receive your reviews and suggestions.

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!



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**Empowering
the autistic
community
of Greater
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years.**



What's the difference between Asperger's & Autism?

Asperger's Syndrome is no longer a stand-alone diagnosis. It's now part of the autism spectrum disorder (ASD). In other words, people with signs and symptoms of Asperger's receive an ASD diagnosis.

You may hear a lot of people mention Asperger's Syndrome in the same breath as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Asperger's was once considered different from ASD. But a diagnosis of Asperger's no longer exists. The signs and symptoms that were once part of an Asperger's diagnosis now fall under ASD.

There are historical differences between the term "Asperger's" and what's considered "autism." But it's worth getting into what exactly Asperger's is and why it's now considered a part of ASD.

About autism spectrum disorder (ASD)

Not all autistic children exhibit the same signs of autism or experience these signs to the same degree.

That's why autism is considered to be on a spectrum. There's a wide range of behaviours and experiences that are considered to fall under the umbrella of an autism diagnosis.

Here's a brief overview of behaviours that may cause someone to be diagnosed with autism:

- differences in processing sensory experiences, like touch or sound, from those who are considered "neurotypical"
- differences in learning styles and problem-solving approaches, like quickly learning complex or difficult topics but having difficulty mastering physical tasks or conversational turn-taking
- deep, sustained special interests in specific topics
- repetitive movements or behaviours (sometimes called "stimming"), like flapping hands or rocking back and forth
- a strong desire to maintain routines or establishing order, like following the same schedule each day or organizing personal belongings a certain way
- difficulty processing and producing verbal or non-verbal communication, like having trouble expressing thoughts in words or displaying emotions outwardly
- difficulty processing or participating in neurotypical social interactive contexts, like by greeting someone back who's greeted them

About Asperger's Syndrome

Asperger's Syndrome was previously considered a "mild" or "high-functioning" form of autism. This means people who received an Asperger's diagnosis tended to experience behaviours of autism that were often considered minimally different from those of neurotypical people.

Asperger's was first introduced into the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) in 1994, when English psychiatrist Lorna Wing translated the works of Austrian physician Hans Asperger and realised his research found distinct characteristics in autistic children from those with "milder" symptoms.

Asperger's vs Autism: What are the differences?

Asperger's and autism are no longer considered separate diagnoses. People who may have previously received an Asperger's diagnosis instead now receive an autism diagnosis.

But many people who were diagnosed with Asperger's before the diagnostic criteria changed in 2013 are still perceived as "having Asperger's."

And many people also consider Asperger's as part of their identity. This is especially considering the stigma that still surrounds autism diagnoses in many communities around the world.

Yet the only real "difference" between the two diagnoses is that

people with Asperger's may be considered as having an easier time "passing" as neurotypical with only "mild" signs and symptoms that may resemble those of autism.

Do treatment options differ for Asperger's and Autism?

Neither what was previously diagnosed as Asperger's nor autism is a medical condition that needs to be "treated."

Those diagnosed with autism are considered "neurodivergent." Autistic behaviours aren't considered what's socially typical. But that doesn't mean that autism indicates there's anything wrong with you.

What's most important is that you or someone in your life who's been diagnosed with autism know that they're loved, accepted, and supported by the people around them.

Conclusion

The most important thing here is that Asperger's is no longer a functional term. The signs that were once used to diagnose it belong more firmly in a diagnosis of ASD.

And a diagnosis of autism doesn't mean you or a loved one has a "condition" that needs to be "treated." What's most important is that you love and accept yourself or any autistic person you know.

Learning the nuances of ASD can help you begin to understand that the experiences of

ASD are the experiences of each individual. No single term fits all.



ALWAYS
UNIQUE
TOTALLY
INTELLIGENT
SOMETIMES
MYSTERIOUS



The Characters

There are 39 speaking parts in the play, performed by 10 actors. The actors who portray 4 main characters – Christopher, Ed, Judy and Siobhan – do not take on multiple roles but do work within the ensemble to create other people on stage or to move props and costumes. The play is told from Christopher's viewpoint, and he is onstage for the entire show. Many other characters only appear briefly and have few lines.

Christopher Boone

Christopher is 15 years, 3 months and 2 days old with a unique perspective on the world. He is stubborn and determined, but the world beyond is frightening and confusing. He notices things in minute detail, finds figurative language difficult, doesn't like to be touched by anyone, and relates more easily to animals (especially his pet rat, Toby) and objects. Christopher is very good at maths and is fascinated by the workings of the universe. He doesn't like strangers, or the colours yellow and brown. His favourite colour is red.

Siobhan

Siobhan is Christopher's teacher who suggests that Christopher writes the book about his detective work. She is always a calming voice that Christopher hears, and she acts as a guide through his quest. She helps Christopher to think about how to keep calm and sometimes appears in his memory to assist him through tough situations.

Ed Boone

Christopher's father, Ed, a boiler engineer, is a single dad, living with Christopher in Swindon. He loves his son and champions his maths abilities at school. Ed is under a lot of pressure to earn money to keep his family, and occasionally struggles to deal with Christopher's sometimes challenging behaviour, even to the point of lashing out. Ed demands that Christopher should stop his investigation of a dead dog named "Wellington."

Judy

We first encounter Christopher's mother Judy when he recalls in his book the moment his dad told him that she had died. Christopher remembers his mum on the beach in Cornwall, swimming, diving, persuading him to paddle in the waves. Judy found it difficult to cope with Christopher's condition and felt isolated in the home and in her marriage.

Mrs Alexander

Mrs. Alexander is an older woman living on Christopher's street. She's not a friend of the family. Christopher calls her a stranger but she seems to know all the neighbourhood gossip. She supports Christopher's initial detective work, helping him fill in the gaps about why someone would have wanted to kill Mrs. Shears' dog Wellington.

Mrs Shears

A next-door neighbour of Christopher's, Mrs. Shears is angry with Christopher when she sees him with her dead dog Wellington, whose discovery starts the play. She's divorced from her husband, Mr. Shears. As the play develops, we discover that Mrs. Shears had at one time been close to Christopher's father.

Mr Roger Shears

Mrs. Shears' ex-husband, who now lives in London. When Christopher starts investigating Wellington's death, Mr. Shears becomes 'Prime Suspect.'

Mrs Gascoyne

The Headteacher at Christopher's school, Mrs Gascoyne represents the education system and perhaps throws light in how its "one size fits all" approach to qualifications can restrict students. She wants to help Christopher achieve his goals but finds herself held back by the system. Reluctantly, and with some persuading from his father, Mrs Gascoyne allows Christopher to sit for an advanced maths exam at school.

The Policemen

There are several policemen in the play in both Swindon and London. Christopher trusts policemen inherently – they represent the law and thus represent truth – but his trust is tested when they bump up against the things that he finds difficult: being touched, and someone trying to take him home when he doesn't want to go.

Punk Girl / Lady in the Street

They represent the crowd: the mix of people of all ages. They emphasise that we are all different and many of the audience live on the edge of society. Perhaps they too have their own identity and don't conform to expectations.

Reverend Peters

The Reverend tries to explain death and afterlife to Christopher to reassure him. Christopher stumps him with a question about the precise location of heaven.

We would like to politely remind you to switch off all mobile phones for the duration of the performance, and that the taking of photographs, or any kind of filming or recording of the production is strictly prohibited. Thankyou.

Thank You
VERY MUCH

Without our incredibly dedicated, enthusiastic team of **Volunteers** and **Staff**, whose sheer hard work often goes un-noticed, Altrincham Garrick Playhouse would simply be unable to continue providing such a range of top-quality productions for you everyone enjoy. **With their continuous commitment to excellence, we owe them all a huge debt of gratitude. Thankyou all so much!**

The Cast

Christopher
Charlie Gallagher

Siobhan
Lauren Brown

Ed
Loui Quelcutti

Judy
Rachel Jacquest

Mrs Alexander / Posh Woman / Voice Six
Sasha Carillo

*Mrs Shears / Mrs Gascoyne /
Voice One / Woman on Train /
Woman on Heath / Shopkeeper*
Megan Preece

*Roger (Mr Shears) / Duty Sergeant /
Voice Two / Mr Wise /
Man behind counter / Drunk One*
Dean Chaudhri

*Policeman 1 / Mr Thompson /
Voice Three / Drunk Two /
Man with Socks / London Policeman*
Advait Chorghade

*No. 40 / Voice Five / Lady in Street
Information / Punk Girl*
Jennifer Luciano

*Reverend Peters / Uncle Terry /
Voice Four / Station Policeman /
Station Guard*
Callum Johnson

The Production Team

Director Joseph Meighan

Set Design Barbara Biddulph

Original Composition Mark Goggins

Stage Manager Mark McEwan

Asst. Stage Managers Christine Chrystal

..... Siobh  n Linnett

Rehearsal Prompt Alison Davis

Lighting Design James Merrington

Sound Design Mark Goggins

Technical Assistance /

Projection Operations Josh McMillan

Movement Director Joseph Meighan

Properties Claire Eddleston-Rose

..... Christine Chrystal

Costume Production Mike Shaw

Assisted by Stella Blackburn

Julie Shaw Betty Farmer

Lynne Saleh Catherine Phillips

Helen Phillips Sarah Steer

Noel Watson Jen McEvoy

Head of Stage Paul Simpson

Production Carpenter Steve Cox

Scenic Artist Mandy Cooke

Assisted by Barry Purves Trevor McKie

Jane Milner Charlotte Leigh

Rob Robinson Ruth Stocks

..... Holly Cooper

Set Construction Paul Simpson Steve Cox

Trevor McKie Alan Jones

Barry Borgen Mark McEwan

Nick McKie John Murphy

Andy McHugh John Ross

Cliff Mills Dave Bailey

Bob Green Drew Lightfoot

..... Alistair Duffy

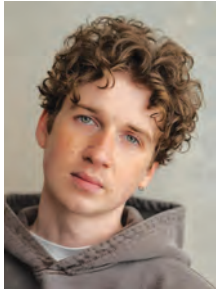
Rehearsal & Production Photography

..... Martin Ogden

Publicity & Programme Design Nick Sample

*All information was believed to be correct at the time of going to press.
Some names or designations in the Creative Team may have since changed.*

The Company

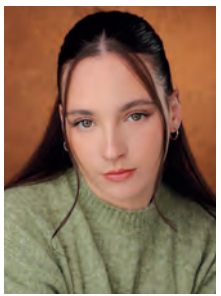


Charlie Gallagher
Christopher Boone

Charlie's most recent appearance with us on the Main Stage was last September, when he played **Crowther** in **The History Boys** – a role he had also played in our 2016 staging of Alan Bennett's brilliant play. And once again, with Christopher Boone, his youthful looks have meant that he's able to portray another young character.

Some of Charlie's previous Altrincham Garrick Playhouse appearances include roles in **The Laramie Project**, **Shakespeare In Love**, **Billy Bibbit** in **One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest**, **The Lieutenant Of Inishmore**, **Beautiful Thing**, **Corrie**, **Blackadder Goes Forth**, and last season he made his musical theatre debut as **An Inventor** and a **Vulgarian Soldier** in **Chitty Chitty Bang Bang**, before giving an unforgettably compelling performance as **Oskar** in the Garrick Ensemble's staging of **Let The Right One In**.

Charlie has loved the whole process working on this amazing play (again!) with such a talented Cast, Director & Crew. He hopes you enjoy the show!



Lauren Brown
Siobhan

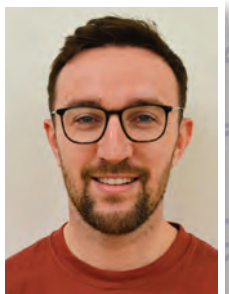
Lauren is a recent graduate of Shockout Arts, having trained on their Musical Theatre degree course. She began dancing at the age of 4 and found her passion for Musical Theatre and Acting during high school.

Her previous performance credits at Altrincham Garrick include **Jim Hawkins** in **Treasure Island**, **Ensemble/ News Presenter** in **Merrily We Roll**

Along, **Ensemble/ Dancer/ The Jitterbug** in **The Wizard of Oz** as well as **Ensemble/ Dancer** in **Chitty Chitty Bang Bang**.

Other Theatre Credits include **Lily St. Regis** in **Annie**, **A Christmas Carol** and **Fame**, and most recently she appeared in **Opening Up! A Musical Showcase**.

Lauren has also danced around the country at many prestigious venues including Her Majesty's Theatre, London, The Empire Theatre, Liverpool and The Lowry, Salford, and last year performed at **Move It**.

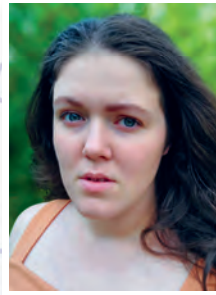


Loui Quelcutti
Ed

Loui is making his eighth appearance at the Altrincham Garrick Playhouse having previously performed in two Garrick Ensemble productions – as **Dale Harding** in **One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest**, after which he gave a superb performance as 'The Bard of Avon' in the title role of **Shakespeare in Love**. Loui's debut with the company was in the Inspector Morse murder mystery **House**

of Ghosts, since when he's also played **Frank Lubey** in **All My Sons**. Last year Loui played **Scott Hipwell** in **The Girl on the Train**, followed by **Tyler** in our stunning production of **Merrily We Roll Along**, and most recently played **Mr Rochester** in Carole Carr's memorable staging of **Jane Eyre**.

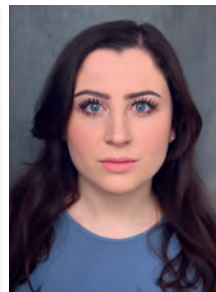
Loui has previously performed in many productions across the North West including **The Importance of Being Earnest**, **The Bacchae** and **The American Dream**.



Rachel Jacquest
Judy

This is Rachel's third production at the Altrincham Garrick Playhouse, after appearing as **Evelyn/ Ensemble** in **Merrily We Roll Along** (2024) and **Amy** in **Pronoun** (2023). She also featured in the **Altrincham Garrick Show Choir's** recent show **Songs from Stage & Screen**. Rachel studied theatre at Lancaster University and her previous roles include **Ronette** and **Ensemble** in **Little Shop of Horrors** (FPAC, 2022; WAODS, 2019) and **Cleomenes** in **The Winter's Tale** (Bear Pit Stratford-upon-Avon, 2018).

As the real-life mother of an autistic son, Rachel is honoured to be playing this challenging role and is very grateful to all at the Garrick for trusting her in bringing **Judy** to life.



Sasha Carillo
Mrs Alexander / Posh Woman / Voice Six

Sasha has been involved in a number of Garrick productions over the past couple of years, including **Shakespeare in Love**, **All My Sons** and **Into the Woods** where she played the role of **Rapunzel**. Sasha's previous credits include **Grace Farrell** in **Annie** and **Lily** in **The Secret Garden**, and most recently she appeared as

Princess Jill in **Jack and the Beanstalk**. Outside of the Garrick she recently played **Johanna** in **Sweeney Todd** and **Josephine** in **HMS Pinafore** with North Manchester AOS – for which she was thrilled to win the **Association of Community Theatre's Spotlight Award for Most Accomplished Actress in a Musical Comedy**.

Sasha trained at the Guildford School of Acting, where she graduated in 2020 with a BA in Actor Musicianship. She plays both violin and piano and occasionally does so on stage!

Sasha is delighted to be appearing in what will be her third production with the Garrick Ensemble. She has found the process of working on this play incredibly rewarding and would like to thank all who have made it possible.



Megan Preece
Mrs Shears / Mrs Gascoyne / Voice One / Woman on Train / Woman on Heath / Shopkeeper

Megan is delighted to be returning to the Altrincham Garrick Playhouse, having previously appeared as **Milky White** in **Into the Woods** and most recently as part of the **Ensemble** in **The Wizard of Oz**. Originally from York, Megan has performed in a variety of local productions, including **Julia** in **The Wedding Singer**, **Ado Annie** in **Oklahoma**, and **Roz** in **9 to 5**.

Megan holds a Music Degree from the University of Huddersfield, where she performed at the Leeds O2 Academy and led a summer choir project in a high-security prison!

This play holds a special place in Megan's heart, as it is one of her and her Granny's favourites. Having seen it together in London, and with her Granny supporting every performance Megan has done, being a part of this show feels especially meaningful. She thanks the cast and crew for their support and hopes you enjoy the play!"



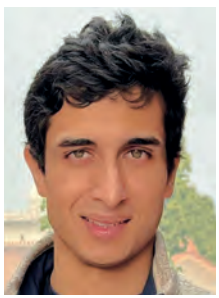
Dean Chaudhri

*Mr Roger Shears /
Duty Sergeant / Voice Two /
Mr Wise / Man behind counter /
Drunk One*

Dean is thrilled to make his debut at the Altrincham Garrick in ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time***. Previously, he was an active member of Imperial College Musical Theatre Society, where he originated the role of

Dipper in the 2023 musical production of ***Gravity Rises***. Dean has also appeared as part of the CBBC TV series *I Want My Own Room*, and was previous musical director of A Cappella group ***Logarithmics*** (formerly *Surcery*).

He has thoroughly enjoyed working with such an incredible cast and crew on this production and has learnt so much during the process. He hopes you enjoy the show as much as he loved bringing it to life!



Advait Chorghade

*Policeman 1 / Mr Thompson /
Voice Three / Drunk Two /
Man with Socks /
London Policeman*

Advait is delighted to return to the stage in ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*** with Altrincham Garrick. After making his theatrical debut in 2024 as *Akhtar* in ***The History Boys***, he is excited to embrace the challenge of

this new production and bring its powerful story to life through a range of characters.

A mathematics graduate working as a quant, Advait balances his love for theatre with passions for chess, poker, and astronomy.

Advait wishes to thank the director, cast, and crew for their encouragement and creativity, which have made this journey so memorable. He hopes the audience enjoys the performance as much as he has enjoyed being a part of it.

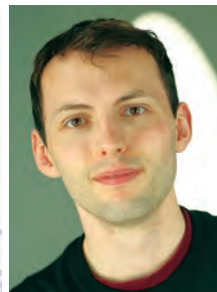


Jennifer Luciano

*No. 40 / Voice Five /
Lady in Street / Information /
Punk Girl*

A graduate from the Arden School of Theatre, Jennifer is making her debut at Altrincham Garrick Playhouse in this production, and is looking forward to being in many more!

As well as performing, Jennifer is a writer and her piece ***Kaleidoscope*** can be found online at www.factoryinternational.org/factoryplus/new-writers-autumn-24/kaleidoscope/. She has also had the privilege of working with *idontloveyouanymore* on their project ***On The Curled Clouds***.



Callum Johnson

*Reverend Peters / Uncle Terry /
Voice Four / Station Policeman /
Station Guard*

Callum has been a regular performer at The Altrincham Garrick Playhouse in recent years. His appearances include ***Shakespeare in Love*** (2023), ***The Jungle Book*** (2023), ***Witness For the Prosecution*** (2023), ***Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*** (2023), ***Let The Right One In*** (2024) and, most recently, ***The Wizard of Oz*** (2024). He notably made an appearance as *a Lost Boy* in ***Peter Pan*** at The Lowry Theatre, Salford (2010-11) and regularly appeared on stage at University. Since graduating, Callum has acted with several companies in the Greater Manchester area. Other performances include ***George Hollings*** in ***The Unreturning*** (2022) at the Harlequin Theatre, Northwich and ***Tom Wingfield*** in ***The Glass Menagerie*** (2022) with NK Theatre Arts.

He is thrilled to be joining the Garrick Ensemble again in ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*** and is very proud to be supporting I AM and the fantastic work they do, helping people with autism in Greater Manchester. He hopes you enjoy the show!.

If you like theatre... no, if you love theatre, drama, comedy, musical theatre, play reading, poetry and much more and would relish the opportunity to meet new people, then the **Altrincham Garrick Play Reading Club** is for you!

The event is all about relaxed, no-pressure reading and the best way to read a play is to do it out loud, so join us and give it a go! Play readings take place once a month in the Garrick Bar.

The titles announced so far for 2025 are:

Friday 7 February:



Friday 7 March:



Friday 4 April:



Friday 6 June:



Friday 4 July:



Refreshments
served from
12:00 noon.

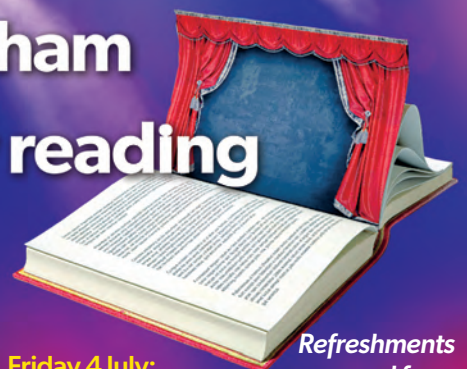
Reading starts
12:30pm.

Duration:
Approx 3 hours.

Age Guidance: 16 +

Tickets: £7.00

**altrincham
garrick
play reading**



The Creative Team



Joseph Meighan

Director

Joseph is the Artistic Director at Altrincham Garrick Playhouse and trained at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts in London. He has worked as a Theatre Director, Producer and Actor in both Manchester and London, and his love for theatre began at the age of four when he joined The Helen Donohue School of Speech and Drama.

Directing credits include *The Jury* (Upstairs at the Gatehouse/ Off-West End, London), *Parade*, *A Chorus Line*, *The Addams Family*, *GHOST*, *Chicago* (Waterside Arts), *The Wizard of Oz*, *Betrayal* (Z-Arts), *Our Town*, *Anne Boleyn*, *Into The Woods*, *Guys & Dolls*, *Scrooge! The Musical*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Les Miserables* and many more.

Directing credits at Altrincham Garrick Playhouse: *People*, *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert*, *Annie*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Crucible*, *The Secret Garden*, *Disney's The Little Mermaid*, *The Last Five Years*, *CHATROOM*, *Curtain Up*, *Peter Pan*, *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*, *Jumpers for Goalposts*, *Calendar Girls – The Musical*, *Shakespeare In Love*, *The Laramie Project*, *Our Town*, *The Sound of Music* and Stephen Sondheim's spectacular musical *Into The Woods*. Last season, Joseph directed productions of *The Shawshank Redemption*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *Let The Right One In*, *Treasure Island* and Sondheim's *Merrily We Roll Along*, while in 2024-25 he's directed *The Wizard of Oz* and *Jack and the Beanstalk*, – in which he had to make several unscheduled appearances as *Dame Trot*!

Joseph was the Founder and Artistic Director of MYT Productions in Manchester for ten years. He also regularly works as an acting coach and for the past few years he has trained actors at different stages of their careers. He was the Choral Company Manager for a number of Choirs for several years, where he would annually produce Concerts in Cambridge.

Joseph trained as an actor and his theatre credits whilst training include Craig in *Fanatical - A New Musical* (Workshop and Karame Club), *Reverend Parris* in *The Crucible* (Arcola Theatre, London) and *Tim Butyn* in *Singer* (Bernie Grant Arts Centre, London). After graduating, he appeared as *Ian* in *Might Never Happen* (UK Tour) before concentrating on his career as a Theatre Director.



Barbara Biddulph

Set Design

Barbara Biddulph has worked as a Designer and Art Director at *Factorycreate* in Manchester since 2010, bringing experience from her previous roles as Art Director at *Hot Animation* (1998-2005), as an Independent Freelance Designer and Model Maker (1991-97) and as a Freelance Model Maker at *Barrow Model Makers* (1989-91).

Barbara is best known for her work on the movies *Frankenweenie* (Special Effects, 2012) and *Fantastic Mr Fox* (Special Effects, 2009). Her projects have also included 53 Episodes of *Bob the Builder*, 12 Episodes of *Strange Hill High* and 3 Episodes of *Norman Picklestripes* (2019).

Barbara was also the Set Designer and creator of the puppet 'Toddie' - *Lord Tod Wadley* for Barry Purves' film *No Ordinary Joe*, which was both filmed and received its World Premiere at the Garrick Playhouse.

Most recently for the Playhouse, Barbara created the puppet characters of *Captain Flint* in last season's *Treasure Island*, and the adorable *Toto* in *The Wizard of Oz*. We are delighted that she agreed to design the set for *Curious Incident*, and we hope that it'll be the first of many.



Mark Goggins

Original Composition Sound Design

Mark recently retired from his position as Reader in Music Theatre at The University of Central Lancashire where he led the BA (Hons) Music Theatre degree and also directed the award-winning University Chamber Choir.

Mark has directed many UCLan Music Theatre productions including *A Little Night Music*, *Parade*, *Spring Awakening*, *bare – a pop opera*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *London Road* and *Urinetown*. Mark has also directed the Music Theatre Graduate Showcase, performed annually in both London and Manchester.

His professional musical theatre work includes the UK tours of *Beauty and the Beast*, *Cats*, *Starlight Express*, *The Producers*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *The Sound of Music*, *Shrek*, *Wicked* and most recently *The Lion King*.

Mark has conducted at many of the leading UK concert venues including The Royal Festival Hall, Birmingham Symphony Hall and the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, where he has performed with the Hallé Orchestra.

While he's better known here as a Musical Director, Mark made his dramatic directorial debut at the Garrick last year with the Studio production of Martin McDonagh's *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*. Previous credits with the Playhouse as a Musical Director include *La Cage aux Folles*, *A Little Night Music*, *Follies*, *Cabaret*, *West Side Story*, *Sweeney Todd*, *The Secret Garden*, *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, *Cats*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Calendar Girls – The Musical*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* and, most recently, *Merrily We Roll Along*.

Mark also works as a composer and sound designer – a role he's filled for the Garrick with our productions of *Blue Stockings* and *Let The Right One In*.

Behind the scenes...



Alison Davis

Rehearsal Prompt

A hugely experienced and talented actress and singer, Alison joined the Garrick in 1976 after appearing in the amateur première of the rock musical *Hair!*

Favourite parts (so far) have included *Lucy* in *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*, *Lady Bracknell* in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Annie Wilkes* in *Misery*, *Florence Foster Jenkins* in *Glorious* and *Sally Durant* in *Follies*.

Alison is also a keen fan of Gilbert and Sullivan, and has played most of the contralto leads with Sale G&S and at Buxton International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival, winning 3 best actress awards in these productions.

Alison enjoys the role of prompting in rehearsals, and would encourage other actors to take on this rewarding job as it gives you a chance to watch how a show evolves from the read through to the first night.

Simon Stephens

Simon Stephens and Mark Haddon met when the former was a resident dramatist at the National Theatre in 2006, when his play *Motortown* was being staged, and Mark had a residency there. They connected over both being grumpy men in their forties with children. They'd sit down over lunch, grumbling about how indie music wasn't as good as when they were teens. And they seemed to share a hatred of the same plays...

Simon Stephens is a prolific playwright who has continued the tradition of theatre into the 21st Century with a run of gritty tragedies. Working in the UK and Europe, Stephens has been a significant champion of new work, and has written over 20 works – including adaptations of novels and classics – since his first play *Bluebird* premiered at the Royal Court in 1998. His work is a mainstay of modern British theatre, with his plays being staged at iconic venues in the UK such as the National Theatre, The Royal Court and the Young Vic.

Stephens has a large portfolio of plays, staged over the last two decades. They include the critically acclaimed *Pornography* (2007), *Punk Rock* (2009) and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (2012), which premièred at the National Theatre and later toured on the West End and Broadway. Despite neither director Marianne Elliot or NT supremo Nick Hytner initially liking the play, it went on to win seven Olivier Awards, then the equal record for a single play. Other accolades include the Olivier Award for best new play for *On the Shore of the Wide World* in 2006 and the Theatre Heute Award for *Motortown* in 2007, *Pornography* in 2008 and *Wastwater* in 2011.

Through his impressive catalogue of works, Stephens' writing has evolved and shifted constantly throughout his career. His works range from dirty realism (*Motortown*, *Heron*) to poetic fragmentation (*Pornography*) to storytelling (*Seawall*) and even dream-like (or more appropriately nightmare-like) neo-noir in *Three Kingdoms*.

Simon joined Manchester Metropolitan University as Professor of Scriptwriting in 2017. Many recent works, including *The Funfair* (2015) and *Fatherland* (2017) have premiered in Manchester theatres. Last year, his radical adaptation of Tolstoy's (Uncle) *Vanya*, with all the roles being performed by one actor (long-time collaborator Andrew Scott), won the Olivier Award for "Best Revival".

Simon Stephens (left) and Mark Haddon at the National Theatre in 2012.



Mark Haddon

Mark Haddon was born on September 26, 1962, in Northampton. As a child, he read little fiction; instead, he read books about science, particularly chemistry and archaeology. He imagined that he would become a palaeontologist. In his adolescence, he discovered poetry, another of his adult writing interests.

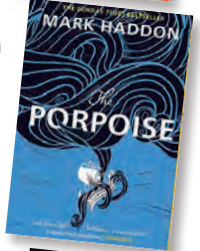
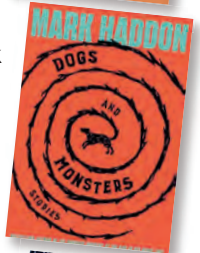
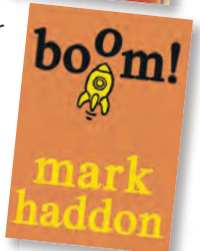
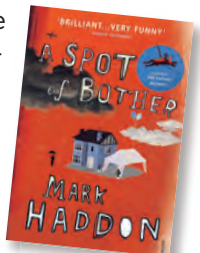
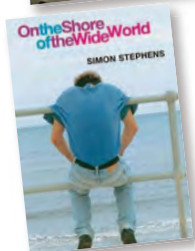
His novel *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (2003) was published in two imprints – one for children and one for adults – to immediate success. The two versions were identical except for their covers; even the "adult" language was main-

tained in the young people's version. (Haddon has pointed out that all children know that adults swear, and in the novel, only the adults use swear words.) It won 17 literary prizes, including the 2003 Whitbread Book of the Year. His second novel, *A Spot of Bother*, was published in 2006 and shortlisted for the 2006 Costa Novel Award.

His first book for children, *Gilbert's Gobstopper*, was published in 1987 and was followed by other books and picture books for children, many of which he illustrated. Haddon's first book of poetry, *The Talking Horse and the Sad Girl and the Village Under the Sea*, was published in 2005. Other works include the novels *Boom!* (2009), *The Red House* (2012), *The Pier Falls* (2016), and *The Porpoise* (2019).

Haddon graduated from Oxford University in 1981 and earned a Masters of Science in English literature at Edinburgh University. He then undertook a variety of jobs, including work with children and adults with mental and physical disabilities as well as work as an illustrator and a cartoonist for publications including the *New Statesman*, *The Spectator*, *Private Eye*, *The Sunday Telegraph*, and *The Guardian*. From 1996, he also worked on television projects and created and wrote several episodes for *Microsoap*, for which he won two BAFTAs and a Royal Television Society Award.

Mark Haddon teaches creative writing for the Arvon Foundation and at Oxford University.



Asperger Syndrome

Asperger Syndrome (often shortened to Asperger's) is no longer used as a diagnostic term for Autism, and is considered controversial due to the history of Hans Asperger.

Historically, Asperger syndrome was used as a diagnostic term for some autistic people who did not also have a diagnosis of a learning disability. Broadly, it is now agreed that what was referred to as '*Asperger Syndrome*' is part of the autism spectrum and there is no need for a separate term.

The history of Asperger and Asperger syndrome

The term '*Asperger Syndrome*' was introduced to the field of autism research in the 1980s by the British psychiatrist Dr Lorna Wing, a co-founder of the National Autistic Society and a consultant to the NAS Diagnostic and Assessment Service until her death in 2014. Dr. Wing pioneered the idea that autism is a spectrum condition and did so with reference to Hans Asperger's much earlier work, which noted marked differences between autistic children.

Asperger Syndrome as a diagnostic term

Asperger syndrome became an official diagnostic term in 1992 with its inclusion in the 10th edition of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD10), and in the 1994 Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Edition (DSM-4) in America. The diagnosis was retired in the next editions of these publications, the DSM-5 in 2013 and the ICD11 in 2019, when it was folded into the diagnosis of 'autism spectrum disorder'.

As a result of these changes, *Asperger Syndrome* should no longer be given as a diagnosis. However, some people continue to describe themselves using this terminology, usually because their diagnosis forms an important part of their identity in a way that is not connected to official diagnostic terminology or its historical context. People who have identified with a diagnosis of Asperger's throughout their life may find the

revelations about Hans Asperger upsetting.

Hans Asperger

Some people who received a diagnosis of Asperger syndrome continue to use this terminology to refer to themselves. Others do not, usually for two reasons: because the term is no longer used officially; and because of revelations about the Austrian psychiatrist Hans Asperger, after whom *Asperger Syndrome* was named, and who was complicit with the Nazis.

Hans Asperger, a pediatrician who first identified the syndrome in 1944, made good with the Nazis by referring children to one of their notorious euthanasia clinics, Medical University of Vienna medical historian Herwig Czech revealed in the journal *Molecular Autism*.

Nearly 800 children who didn't fit into the Third Reich's criteria of "worthy to live" – meaning they lacked "racial purity" and "hereditary worthiness" – died at the Am Spiegelgrund clinic in Vienna between 1940 and 1945.

Asperger frequently referred disabled children to the clinic, according to previously untouched documents from state archives – including Asperger's personnel files and patient case records – unearthed by Czech. The children, who had physical or psychological "defects," were deemed undesirable and were killed through starvation and lethal injection – though their cause of death was reported as pneumonia.

While Asperger touted himself as having shielded his patients from the Nazi regime, he was a cog in its killing machine and was rewarded for his loyalty with career opportunities, Czech found.

"He was responsible for depriving of their liberty many children whom he deemed incapable of existing outside institutions," Czech told The Guardian.



Among Czech's findings is a photo of Herta Schreiber, a 3-year-old girl who suffered from encephalitis and died three months after being admitted to the clinic on Asperger's orders.

The doctor had transferred her because *"she must be an unbearable burden to her mother,"* he wrote, and she was deemed incurable. A specimen of the toddler's brain was found in the basement of the clinic in the late 1990s and was buried in 2002.

Asperger also often deemed sexually abused children to be responsible for what happened to them and anti-Semitic stereotypes often crept into his diagnoses, Czech wrote. The doctor never acknowledged that Jews had been targeted by the Nazis, even after the end of the war.

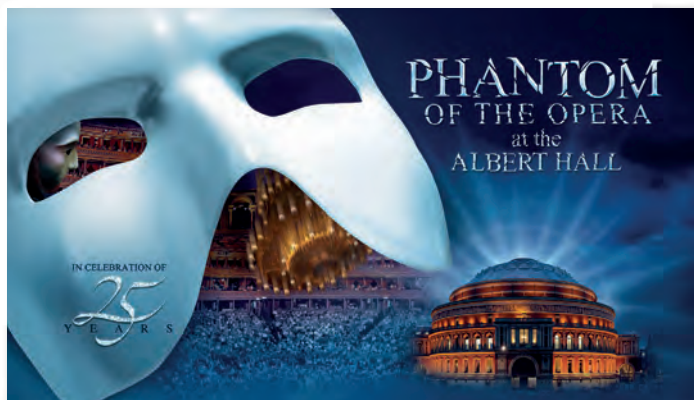
"Asperger was not just doing his best to survive in intolerable conditions but was also complicit with his Nazi superiors in targeting society's most vulnerable people," the editors of *Molecular Autism* wrote in an editorial.

Asperger continued to work as a doctor for more than three decades after the collapse of the Nazi regime and died in 1980.



Wednesday 12 February 7:30pm

David Tennant and Cush Jumbo lead a stellar cast in an 'enthralling' (★★★★★ Daily Telegraph) new production of Shakespeare's *MACBETH*, filmed live at the Donmar Warehouse in London, especially for the big screen. Unsettling intimacy and brutal action combine at breakneck speed as Max Webster (*Life of Pi*, *Henry V*) directs this tragic tale of love, murder, and nature's power of renewal. With a staging 'full of wolfish imagination and alarming surprise' (★★★★★ The Guardian), the immersive cinema surround sound places the audience inside the minds of the Macbeths, asking are we ever really responsible for our actions?



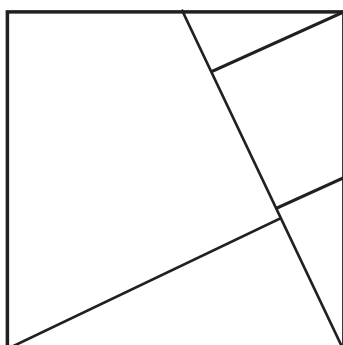
Friday 14 February 7:30pm

Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom Of The Opera* is a worldwide entertainment phenomenon. To celebrate its 25th Anniversary year, Sir Cameron Mackintosh presented *The Phantom Of The Opera* in a fully-staged, lavish production set in the sumptuous splendour of the Royal Albert Hall.

The Phantom Of The Opera At The Albert Hall stars Ramin Karimloo as 'The Phantom' and Sierra Boggess as 'Christine'. They are joined by a supporting cast and orchestra of over 200, along with some very special guest appearances!

**The Pythagoras
Theorem
Answer:**

If you are a stupid person and could not solve the jigsaw puzzle, here is the solution:



BOOK NOW! Tues 25 - Sun 30 March

"The only way to get rid of temptation is to yield to it" Oscar Wilde

A MAN OF NO IMPORTANCE

Music by
Stephen Flaherty

Lyrics by
Lynn Ahrens

Book by
Terrence McNally

Directed by
Barry Purves

Musical Direction by
Ceri Graves



In Dublin in 1964, bus conductor and Oscar Wilde fan Alfie has ambitions to stage *Salome*, despite the objections of the church hierarchy at St. Imelda's, where his amateur theatre group is based. When a newcomer to town, Adele, joins his passengers, he realises he has found the right person for the title role and starts to assemble his cast.

Meanwhile Alfie's sister Lily mistakes her brother's interest in Adele as romantic - she longs to have him off her hands so she can be free to marry. Little does Lily realise that Alfie's love "dare not speak its name" and the object of his affections is in fact bus driver Robbie.

As opening night draws near, secrets come spilling out which threaten to shake this little community to its core. But camaraderie and the redeeming power of theatre offer a thread of hope in this story of friendship, forbidden love and finding our place in the world.

Winner of the 2003 Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Musical, *A Man Of No Importance* is the second successful collaboration by the team of Terrence McNally, Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty, all of whom won TONY Awards for *Ragtime*.

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Josef Weinberger Limited on behalf of Music Theatre International of New York.
www.mtishows.co.uk

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