



Jack and the Beanstalk

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Friday 6
December 2024 –
Sunday 5
January 2025

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"If I'd known about this sooner, I could have saved even more..!"

You may not know this, but old Ebenezer was a great lover of theatre. But he didn't like paying full price for his seats, especially with the current cost of living crisis, and Christmas (*Bah, Humbug!*) just around the corner...

So when he heard about the **Friends of the Garrick**, he was overcome with joy.

(OK, so we know that he doesn't look too thrilled, but he's just saved himself £££s on the price of his Garrick tickets!).

By investing **£30** and becoming a **GOLD** Friend, he can now get unlimited discounted priced tickets for every Garrick Playhouse and Studio show.

He even spent **£20** on a **SILVER** level membership, so that Bob Cratchit could get two discounted priced tickets per show.

And he even gave his nephew Fred a **25U** membership – for **FREE** – so that he could get one seat at a discounted price.

And that made him very happy...

He's now thinking that this would make a great Christmas present for his old friend Jacob...

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Hello & Welcome!

...to Altrincham Garrick Playhouse, and our 2024-25 Pantomime **Jack and the Beanstalk**. In keeping with our ethos of offering 'something for everyone', this is a pantomime for all of the family, and we hope that you all have a fabulously enjoyable time!

Following the outstanding successes of *Peter Pan* in 2021, *Dick Whittington* in 2022 and last year's *Sleeping Beauty*, we are delighted to be working again with Tom Whalley, one of the brightest young writers of pantos in the UK today, who has crafted a script that is brilliantly funny, relevant and hugely entertaining whilst still retaining all of the 'traditional' elements for which pantos have become renowned over the years. Oh yes it does!

I'd like to extend my thanks to the cast and the creative team for giving so much time and energy to creating what promises to be a great show, and making the rehearsal period so much fun, and the weeks leading up to the show full of laughter. I would also like to say a huge thank you and note my appreciation to everyone in the departments working so hard behind the scenes. The work and effort that costume, set, props, sound, lights, the crew that run the show backstage, box office, front of house and many other areas put in is simply mind-blowing, and the results shine on stage. They may not take a physical bow at the end of the panto, but they really should, and the applause is as much for them as it is for those on stage. The Garrick is so lucky to have you all! Thank you!

This time of year should be a time of fun and laughter, of celebration and family. But, of course, it can also be a time of reflection, and thoughts of those who have moved on to a higher stage. We were recently devastated to hear of the passing of Val Watkinson. Val had knowledge and expertise that covered many departments and roles, and was a most gifted Actor, Director, Deputy Stage Manager, Coach, Casting Team Member and much more, although in recent years, her favourite title has been "Theatrical Interference".

On a personal note, and following on from that previous statement, Val has "theatrically interfered" with so many of my productions over the years, at the Garrick and elsewhere, that we often joked about how she just knew what I meant when I said a strange reference or where I wanted a cue to go. She shared the same theatrical pulse of all my productions, and she has been invaluable to all that she worked on. Beyond our

working together, as many of you will know, Val and I were very close friends, and I can't express how much she will be missed, how much she has done for me, and how special a friendship it was we shared.

Val would always have been part of the Panto family at the Garrick, so it seems only right that we are dedicating this year's production in her memory. And while we know that she may not be with us any longer, her spirit, her joie-de-vivre, her enthusiasm and her passion for theatre will remain both in our hearts, and in this building, forever.

Later in this programme, you will find details of all of the main-stage shows that we are producing in the next few months, and we urge you to book tickets early to avoid any disappointment. We especially wouldn't want you to miss out on either our Easter half-term staging of *The Worst Witch*, or next October half-term's tremendously exciting production of the musical *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. And if you turn to the back cover, you'll find out which panto we'll be staging at this time next year! Tickets for this are already on sale, so if you don't want to miss out, book now!

But it's not just our own productions that are keeping us busy, with National Theatre Live screenings, and the hugely popular Garrick Show Choir who are currently in the process of planning another sensational show. Together with the season of all-female themed plays in our Studio Theatre, Stand-Up Comedy nights from Manford's Comedy Club, and a brilliant collection of Concerts for all ages, we really do have 'something for everyone'! Keep up to date with all that's happening by visiting our website regularly, or by following us on facebook or Instagram.

We sincerely hope that you have a fabulous time at today's performance, have a safe journey home and a wonderful festive season, and we hope to see you back here soon!



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

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playhouse**

Barrington Rd, Altrincham WA14 1HZ
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Programme written, designed and produced for the Altrincham Garrick Playhouse by Nick Sample Creative Graphic Design 07950 332 645 njcsample1@mac.com www.nicksample.co.uk

The Beanstalk's Roots

The origins of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' are possibly German, where many folk tales of slaying giants are to be found. In British folklore there are tales of 'Jack the Giant Killer', a Cornishman who is said to have rid Wales of all giants.

Jack and his tale are rarely referenced in English literature prior to the eighteenth century. It is often thought that the first written version of *Jack and the Beanstalk* was titled "**Jack Spriggins and the Enchanted Bean**" which was published in 1734 by J. Roberts of London. The giant's catchphrase "**Fee-fi-fo-fum! I smell the blood of an Englishman**" appears in William Shakespeare's *King Lear* (c.1606) in the form "**Fie, foh, and fum, I smell the blood of a British man**", and something similar also appears in '**Jack the Giant Killer**'. Although the rhyme is much older than the fairytale, it has crept into versions of *Jack and the Beanstalk* over the past 150 years, and no pantomime adaptation would be the same without it – accompanied by monstrous, thudding footsteps.

The tale of "**Jack Spriggins and the Enchanted Bean**" tells of a "dirty, lazy, tatter-de-mallon" lad named Jack, who lives with his Grandmother in a hovel. The Grandmother possesses a magic bean which Jack purloins and plants. The Beanstalk grows at an incredible rate, the Grandmother turns into a Toad and chases Jack up the Beanstalk! En route to the top Jack comes across an enchanted tavern, populated by youths dressed "in green satin, laced with silver and white feathers on their caps, each of them mounted upon an Hobby Horse finely becket with ribbons.."

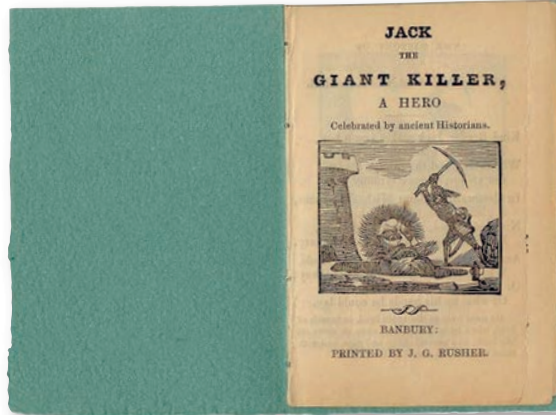
Jack is granted the power to to possess all the pleasures he desires, called "**Invincible Champion**", and destroys the Giant GogMagog, thus releasing a number of knights and "**several thousand virgins**" who were being prepared for the Giant's breakfast table!

The names of *Gog* and *Magog* of course are the legendary Giants who protected London – their effigies can be found today carved into a church front on Fleet Street, and have the hills near Cambridge named after them. Obviously these names were combined in this version to make one Giant.

'**Jack the Giant Killer**' is set during the reign of King Arthur, and this story possibly derived from tales dating back to the Vikings and the Norsemen. It tells of a young, strong and clever Cornish farmer's son named Jack who lives near Lands End. A Giant is terrorising the area, stealing cattle and carrying them away. Jack devises a trap, whereby he digs a pit, covers it with sticks, and lures the Giant to his doom – he does this by blowing his horn to attract him. Jack is dubbed '**Jack the Giant-Killer**' for this heroism & takes the giant's wealth. The Giant is sometimes referred to as "**The Giant of Mount Cornwall**", or as "**Cormoran**". After defeating this Giant, Jack would go on to do many heroic deeds throughout Cornwall, and on occasion in Wales. The legend continues Jack's adventures as he fights another Giant, and gains for himself a coat that makes him invisible, and "**Seven League Boots**" that give him incredible speed. He often has a magic sword.

The Beanstalk does not feature in this legend. The addition of the magic beans, the hen that lays golden eggs and the singing harp were yet to be created.

In 1807 the story was printed in full in "**The History of Mother Twaddle and the Marvellous achievements of her Son Jack**", appearing as a six-penny booklet, and as "**The History of Jack and The Beanstalk printed from the original manuscript never before published**" also in 1807.



Above: An early "chapbook" - cheaply made, affordable paperback - from circa 1815.

The "**Mother Twaddle**" version has the Dame finding a sixpence, and sending her son to market to buy a goose. He is swindled by a pedlar, receives a "magic" bean, plants it and by the next morning the "top was not seen" it was so tall.

Jack reaches a Giant's castle, is helped by the Giant's servant, a pretty girl, and it is she who administers a "knock-out" potion to the Giant, after which Jack chops his head off, sends for his Mother and marries the maiden.



On film, *Jack and the Beanstalk* appeared early on in film-making, which shows it's immense popularity. A silent movie version hit the screens for the first time in 1902. A follow-up in 1917 was 1 hour 40 minutes long – an epic for a silent movie.

In the 1952 film starring legendary American comedy duo Bud Abbott and Lou Costello, the giant is blamed for poverty at the foot of the beanstalk, as he has been stealing food and wealth, and the hen that lays golden eggs originally belonged to Jack's

family. Conversely, Jim Henson's 2001 TV mini-series *Jack and the Beanstalk: The Real Story* vilifies Jack, reflecting Henson's disgust at Jack's unscrupulous actions.



Above: Movie posters from the 1917 silent version, and Warner Brothers' 1952 version with Abbott and Costello.

The Pantomime

It was the famous actor manager David Garrick who first presented a play of "Jack and the Giant Killer" in 1773. Too early for a pantomime, it was a Christmas entertainment. For a while the story of "Jack the Giant Killer" could be found alongside "Jack and the Beanstalk" - The Lyceum Theatre presented a version in 1809, shortly after the publication of the "History of Jack and the Beanstalk".

The first pantomime was performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane in 1819. It was called "**Jack and the Beanstalk, or Harlequin and the Ogre**" by Charles Dibdin. An actress named Eliza Povey played Jack, and - bearing in mind the date - this fact makes her a contender for the very first female "**Principal Boy**" - even if the "**pantomime**" was not as we would know it today.

Theatrical legend has it that the Giant Beanstalk was so tall that Miss Povey refused point blank to climb it, as it towered over the stage at Drury Lane. This privilege went to a young boy named Sullivan. This early climb up the ladder of success enabled the lowly Sullivan to eventually become principal dancer at the Academie Royal in Paris - "*an artiste of considerable merit and a highly respected member of society!*"

Drury Lane again presented the pantomime, now called "**Jack and the Beanstalk, or Harlequin leap-year, and the merry pranks of the good little people**" in 1859, and the renowned pantomime 'Dame' Dan Leno made his debut in the Surrey Theatre production of 1886 as "**Dame Durden**". He later played Dame in "**Jack and the Beanstalk**" in 1889 at Drury Lane.

The 1899 pantomime at Drury Lane created a sensation with the climactic scene. The Nation was at that time engaged in the Boer War, which was eleven weeks old when the pantomime opened. For this production the Giant - traditional name "Blunderbore" was renamed "Blunderboer"! When the scene revealed the dead giant, the British Army (children dressed in full uniform) marched out of his pockets to wild acclaim! This was a reference to The Boer Leader's boast "*That I could put the British Army in my pocket!*" Again, Dan Leno played "**Dame Trott**" in this production. The pantomime concluded with a pageant of Shakespeare's Heroines, who emerged from huge books in the Giant's library.

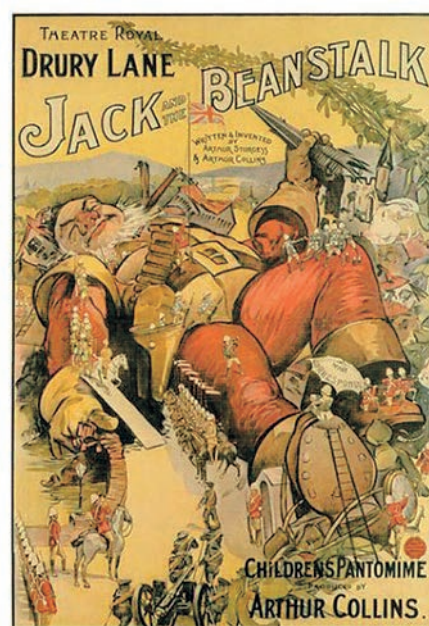
The Characters:

The hero, **Jack**, is a typical folklore hero, lazy, unscrupulous but with a heart of gold. Jack has a name that will not change - after all, his is the title role! His surname is nearly always Trott, and his mother is **Dame Trott** - A "Trot" was an old nickname for an old hag! The comic role is usually Jack's brother - often **Simon** - an abbreviation of "**Simple Simon**" - a name that probably dates back to the Nursery Rhyme "**Simple Simon met a pie-man...**". In the past he has also been called "**Tommy Tucker**", "**Muggles**", "**Miffins**", "**Simple Sammy**", and he has been "**Silly Billy**" on occasion. The most popular and traditional name for **The Cow** is "**Daisy**", although over the years many other names have been used... including "**Daffodil**", "**Buttercup**", "**Connie The Cow**", "**Mabel**", "**Constance**", "**Matilda**", "**Jessie**", "**Ethel**"... and "**Pat**"!

When she is the daughter of the Squire, the Principal Girl can often be found as **Jill**. This of course is a throw-back to the Nursery Rhyme "**Jack and Jill**". As Princess she has no traditional name, like the **King**, whose name can change from one production to the next. The character of the King is occasionally played as a Squire, or a Baron. In some versions there are both - the Baron being the King's chancellor. Often today the **Fairy** is called the "**Vegetable Fairy**", and has a name connected with the garden - but, again, there is no set traditional name for this character. The traditional name for the **Giant** who lives atop of Beanstalk Land is **Blunderbore**. Another more recent addition to the pantomime has been **Fleshcreep**, the Giant's Henchman (or Hench-person). This part has often been played as a Witch-type character, by either a male or female performer.

The Moral:

Reading the original Fairy Tale, it is noticeable that the moral is all important to the story. The Fairy is at great pains to explain that every-



Above: A Programme Cover from 1899-1900 (top) and Poster from Theatre Royal, Drury Lane pantomimes. The poster clearly has elements of the Boer War, so could also be from 1899.

thing Jack does - stealing, plundering, executing - is all in the name of fairness and justice. She is not the kindest fairy in the wood, however. Threatening to destroy both Jack and his poor mother if Jack does not follow her instructions to the letter proves that! It is a strong moral tale about retribution and revenge.

The pantomime version today, due to the restraints of time, and possibly the chopping down of the plot, not the beanstalk, is very thin on morality. The plot about Jack's wronged father is never told, and the main reason Jack climbs the beanstalk today is mostly a test in which, if successful, he will gain the hand of the King's daughter. The treasure is plundered, and this is seen to be justified because of the Giant's penchant for eating the local population!

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A Tribute to Val Watkinson

On 11 November, we were all shocked and saddened to hear of the passing of Val Watkinson. One of our greatest stalwarts, Val had been a member of the Garrick family for over 40 years, and in that time she became part of the fabric of the theatre. But her legacy also extends across many, many theatres and performing companies across Manchester and Cheshire.

Val loved the Panto at the Garrick, and would always have been involved in one way or another. So it seems fitting to dedicate this year's production to her memory, and put a few words and quotes together to show how much she was loved by us all.



Val was exceptionally passionate about all things 'theatre', and this rubbed off on all who knew her at the Garrick. A long-time member of the Casting Committee, when we had one, Val had a keen eye for talent, both on and off-stage, and would encourage (and occasionally cajole) people to become involved with us.

Although probably not recognised by recent audiences for her on-stage appearances at the Garrick – one of Val's final roles was as *Mrs Lintott* in our 2009 staging of Alan Bennett's *The History Boys* – Val was an exceptionally talented actress who had played a huge number of different parts at various venues over the years, including Shakespearian roles in the Open Air productions that used to take place every summer at Gawsworth Hall.

"I think I first met Val in the mid-1990s, when the director of "Henry V" at Gawsworth asked her to take me aside and get my Scouse accent working properly. She spent 15 minutes helping me... and I thought she was a native still living in Liverpool !!!

I was lucky enough to act alongside her a few times after then – most memorably in "Jeffrey Bernard is Unwell" when 4 of us took on 10-15 roles each, supporting the main character... great fun!!" Hugh Everett.

Val had knowledge and expertise that covered many departments and roles. She was a talented director, and her knowledge of all things technical was impressive, from Sound and Lighting to Set Design and Set Dressing. She was also meticulous, and had a keen eye for detail. She also enjoyed being an innovator, and all her plays were full of surprises.

"I had the pleasure of working with Val on numerous occasions at the Garrick, including The Sound of Music. She was funny and passionate. Always wanting to support others, she used her own experience to help

develop confidence and ability. A very kind lady, whose memorable laugh and facial expressions, would bring smiles to faces.

RIP Val." David Leathlean.

She was very much a team player and had the gift of being able to pull things together, sometimes when they were not going smoothly. On occasion, she was the Garrick's trouble-shooter, not afraid to take difficult decisions to put things right. She could be straight talking, didn't like time wasting, and was always ready with an opinion. But once you'd shown her that you had some ability, astuteness and even common sense, she would do anything for you.

Alongside her occasionally brutal honesty, though, Val also had a tremendous sense of humour, was blessed with an incredibly sharp wit, and had a wonderfully raucous laugh which could be heard from far away.

"Making people laugh is one of life's great tonics, and she always provided that to everyone who had the pleasure of her company!" Pete Brassington.

"I remember when Janet Slade and Val got together in their 'office' to discuss casting (actually having a cigarette outside the Stage Door), you could hear them laughing together from across the car park and even in the bar. They knew how to have fun."

Stuart Slade.

Many of the tributes to Val posted on social media sites have spoken of her warmth when welcoming new members of the company to the Garrick, across all generations, as well as the joy that they have experienced in her company, and in her productions...

"I can't imagine her not being around, she really was part of the ecosystem of the Garrick. We had so much fun in Return to the Forbidden Planet (twice over) with her as director and I will never forget her humour

and kindness. What a loss." Sarah Clark.

"I walked into the Garrick because I heard they were looking for a pantomime dame. Val picked me up and ran with me in the part. We worked on several in the following years. She was always encouraging and she used her considerable knowledge of theatre to help so many people. The first time I directed at the Garrick, she sat in on the last rehearsal and seeing her give me a thumbs up, told me I was on the right track. She didn't take fools kindly and could be "robust" with the truth!... She had so many stories to tell and she did so with brilliant timing. Like so many others, I am so glad to have known her and I will miss her." Philip Edwards.

Val was also one of those people who you may not have seen for a while, but you could almost pick up on a conversation as if you'd just seen each other just minutes earlier.

"Even though I hadn't seen her for 20 years, our online interactions were as if it was yesterday. We lost a good 'un and I hope all the theatres she has worked in dim their lights in her honour." Dave Healey.

Alongside her affiliations to many other organisations including SCAMPS and Wilmslow Green Room Theatre, to whom she also gave an immense amount of time, Val was a true Garrick stalwart, and a wonderful, funny, talented, encouraging and supportive lady of theatre who will be sorely missed by everyone who was lucky enough to have known her.

"It's unthinkable not to have that vibrant force of nature filling the theatre, but she will forever be part, a huge part, of the Garrick's history." Barry Purves.

Sleep tight Val.

Val Watkinson

24 February 1951 – 11 November 2024.

Scenes

ACT ONE

- Scene 1 Once Upon A Time
- Scene 2 The Village of Vegtaville
Song: These Days
 Princess Jill & the Ensemble
Song: You and Me (But Mostly Me)
 Jack and Silly Simon
- Scene 3 A Dark Back Passage
- Scene 4 Dame Trott's
 Pasteurising Parlour
Song: In The Dairy
 Dame Trott, Jack, Silly Simon
 and the Ensemble
- Scene 5 In Limbo
- Scene 6 The Vegtaville Fair
Song: Flash! Bang! Wallop!
 Jack and the Ensemble
- Scene 7 The Road to Market
- Scene 8 Dame Trott's Cottage
- Scene 9 Time to Climb
Song: I'm Still Standing / I'll Be Climbing
 Jack and the Ensemble

ACT TWO

- Scene 1 Cloudland
- Scene 2 Hassle at the Castle
Song: Skyfall
 Fleshcreep
- Scene 3 The Castle Sewers
- Scene 4 Blunderbore's Kitchen
Song: All At Once
 Princess Jill
- Scene 5 The Top of the Beanstalk
- Scene 6 Back in Vegtaville
Song: Time to Dance
 Full Company
- Scene 7 Song Sheet
- Scene 8 Finale

The Cast

FLESHCREEP *The villainous henchperson.
 Servant to Giant Blunderbore* **Sarah Kirk**

MOTHER NATURE *A magical spirit certain to save the day!*
 **Bev Stuart-Cole**

PRINCESS JILL *The beautiful Princess. Sweet but feisty.*
 **Sasha Carillo**

SILLY SIMON *The lovable comic.
 Not the brightest bulb on the Christmas tree...* **Daniel Ellis**

DAME TROTT *The outrageous Dame. Long-suffering mother
 to Simon and Jack* **Martin Deighton-Brown**

JACK TROTT *The eponymous hero of the story.*
 **Alex Day**

KING EDWARD *Ruler of all Vegtaville. Father to Princess Jill.*
 **Jamie King**

PAT THE COW *A cow. Not an instruction...* **Jamie King**



CHILDREN'S ENSEMBLE

Ellie Jim

Emilia Paul

Arielle Ben-Shmuel

Ross Glazier

Eloise Rose Hickson

Indiana Hampson

Lexi Higginson

Amber Robinson

Olivia Sorg

Alice Sorg

Chloe Suthers

The Production Team

Director Joseph Meighan
Musical Director Peter England
Choreography Gemma Sales
Set Design Paul Simpson
 Barry Purves
 Mandy Cooke
 Joseph Meighan
Stage Managers Mark McEwan
 Paul Simpson
Head of Stage Paul Simpson
Asst. Stage Managers Sue Berry & Team
Lighting Design Josh McMillan
Sound Design Peter England
Properties Claire Eddleston-Rose
Costumes Mike Shaw
Assisted by Stella Blackburn
 Julie Shaw Betty Farmer
 Lynne Saleh Dallas Bradshaw
 Helen Phillips Sarah Steer
 Noel Watson Jen McAvoy

Workshop Steve Cox
 Mandy Cooke
 Trevor McKie
Production Carpenters Steve Cox
 Trevor McKie
Scenic Artist Mandy Cooke
Assisted by Barry Purves
 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
 Andy McHugh John Murphy
 Cliff Mills John Ross
 Bob Green Dave Bailey
 Drew Lightfoot
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 Team may have since changed.

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK! WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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.

This season, we've partnered with Star Feedback to make it easy for you to share your opinions. Simply scan the QR code (right) and let us know what you think. Thank you for helping us create the best experience possible!



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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 Creatives



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*, Stephen Sondheim's *Merrily We Roll Along* and, most recently, *The Wizard of Oz*.

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.



GEMMA SALES

Choreographer

Gemma is absolutely thrilled to be choreographing the Pantomime this year at the Altrincham Garrick. Gemma has always lived in Manchester and has been performing from an early age. Since she first started performing in 1995, she has played various roles with other local societies including, *Jan* (*Grease*), *Fairy Bowbells* (*Dick Whittington*), *Tracy Tumblad* (*Hairspray*), *Linda* (*Blood Brothers*), *Little*

Red Riding Hood (*Into The Woods*), *Holly* (*The Wedding Singer*), *Amy March* (*Little Women*), *Jeannie Garstecki* (*The Great American Trailer Park Musical*), *Little Sally* (*Urinetown*) and *Logianne Schwartzandgrubierre* (*The 25th Putnam County Spelling Bee*) with Side By Side Productions at the Hope Mill Theatre.

Gemma has also worked on the entertainment team at Alton Towers and appeared in *Peter Kay's Britain's Got The Pop Factor* in 2008. Gemma's choreography credits include *Footloose*, *Showcase at the Lowry* (Various Groups), *High School Musical & Joseph & the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*. Gemma also worked as a Performing Arts Teacher in a local Primary School for thirteen years, choreographing school productions and teaching Dance and Drama.

Off stage, Gemma now works for a Travel Agency and loves all things Disney. In her spare time she loves to go to the theatre and spend quality time with her husband, family and little dog Tala.

Gemma would like to thank Joe, Peter and everyone at the Altrincham Garrick for welcoming her back into the team and for giving her this opportunity. She would like to give a huge shout out to the entire cast but in particular the company who have been an absolute joy to work with. They have worked so hard during the rehearsal process and are all incredibly talented.

The Company



Sasha Carillo

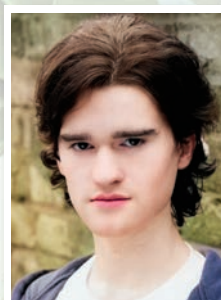
PRINCESS JILL

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*. She made her pantomime debut as *Princess Beauty* in last year's *Sleeping Beauty*. Sasha's previous credits include *Grace Farrell* in *Annie* and *Lily* in *The Secret*

Garden; 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 back on the Garrick's stage playing the role of *Princess Jill*. She has enjoyed every minute of working on this production and would like to thank the wonderful team who have made it possible. She hopes you have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and that you enjoy the show!



Alex Day

JACK

Alex returned to acting at the Garrick Playhouse in 2022, playing *Wally Webb* in *Our Town* and *Goran* in *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* in 2023. Earlier this year he played *Torkel* in the Garrick Ensemble's staging of *Let The Right One In*, and most recently he was part of the company, playing a multitude of roles in our unforgettable sell-out production of *The Wizard of Oz*.

As a child, Alex performed in a number of GAPA productions including *Guys & Dolls*, *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Bite Night*. In 2010, he appeared in the traditional Garrick pantomime as a member of the *Children's Ensemble* in *Dick Whittington*. In 2017, he performed at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival with his University musical, playing electric guitar in the band for the original production of *SIX The Musical*.



Daniel Ellis

SILLY SIMON

Daniel studied drama at Liverpool John Moores University and has continued to act and direct since graduating in 2011. He has previously performed with Altrincham Garrick in *Queers*, *The History Boys*, *Peter Pan*, *Jumpers for Goalposts*, *Shakespeare in Love* and as *Idle Jack* in our 2022 panto *Dick Whittington* and as *Chester*

the Jester in last year's *Sleeping Beauty* – both of which he also directed! This year, Daniel played *Hugo Horton* in the sell-out stagings of *The Vicar of Dibley* and *A Vicar of Dibley Christmas – The Second Coming*.

Daniel is the Co-Artistic Director of Green Carnation Company, a theatre company specialising in LGBTQ+ productions which he co-founded in 2018. Through Green Carnation, Daniel has co-directed *Vincent River*, a tour of *My Night With Reg*, *The Pride* and a number of short films created during lockdown and released online.

Elsewhere he has also directed *The 39 Steps*, *Whipping It Up*, *The Weekend* and *The Complete Works of Shakespeare (Abridged)*.



Martin Deighton-Brown DAME TROTT

Martin has been involved in theatre for many years and has played many roles varying from the serious to the down right bizarre

At Altrincham Garrick he got his first roles as *The Emperor of China* in *Aladdin* followed by some rather strange roles in *Peter Pan!* (A

shadow and a mermaid to name a couple)

Also at Altrincham Garrick he played *Baldeo*, a mean character in the original version of *The Jungle Book*, and *Heywood* in *The Shawshank Redemption*. Following that he joined an ensemble cast of 12 (playing 70 characters) in *A Christmas Carol* where he played (amongst other roles) the flamboyant and loud *Ghost of Christmas Present*. Earlier this year, Martin was very excited to be playing a particularly nasty pirate called *Billy Bones* and also *Killigrew the Kind* (don't let the name fool ye!) in *Treasure Island* – which in one performance included a dramatic (and unscripted) exit from the stage when his character was killed off..!

Martin dedicates a lot of his spare time running a section of the Timperley Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme where he is also training manager.

When he's not escaping to the stage he's spends a lot of time "herding cats"!!! He has a wife, four kids, a dog (who also ignores him!) 2 ducks, 4 chickens and an obnoxious cat! (Oh and a therapist !!!)



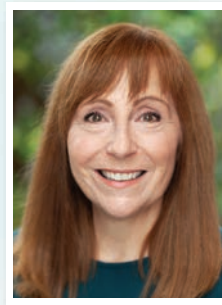
Jamie King KING EDWARD / PAT THE COW

Jamie has previously appeared at the Garrick in *Queers*, *Dick Whittington*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *Our Town*, *A Christmas Carol*, and earlier this year he played *Janne* in *Let the Right One In*, which quickly followed on the back of his memorable role as *Lurgy* in last

year's Garrick pantomime *Sleeping Beauty*. Jamie is delighted to be reunited with many of that company in this year's utterly entertaining *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and to be playing dual roles!

Their other acting credits include *Hindle Wakes* (Green Room Theatre), *Suddenly Last Summer*, *High School Musical* (Pontio Theatre), and their credits as a director include the short film *The Peace Talks*, and Alan Bennett's *Talking Heads* monologues.

Since graduating from Bangor University with a degree in Creative Writing, Jamie has worked at Manchester Literature Festival, Manchester International Festival, and Arts Council England, and worked as a scriptwriter on the sketch show *12 Scenes of Christmas* (Liberty Rep), sci-fi romance *The Peace Talks* (short film), and written the stage play *The Resignation Speech*, which has been performed by various UK theatre companies, mostly recently at the Etcetera Theatre London earlier this year.



Sarah Kirk FLESHCREEP

Sarah's theatre credits include *Tzeitel* in *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Scrooge the Musical*, *Laurey* in *Oklahoma*, *Katie Brown* in *Calamity Jane*, *Guinevere* in *Camelot*, *Nancy* in *Oliver!*, *Anna* in *The King and I*, *Sarah Brown* in *Guys and Dolls*, *Nellie Forbush* in *South Pacific*, *Sally Durant* in *Follies*, *Saturday Night at the Crown*, *In Praise of*

Love, *Allo Allo*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *An Englishman Abroad*, *Abigail's Party*, *Teechers*, *Salt of the Earth*, *An Evening with Victoria Wood*, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, *A Chorus of Disapproval*, *The Deep Blue Sea*, *Bette and Joan* and *A Different Way Home*.

For the Garrick Sarah has appeared in *Corrie!*, *Curtain Up*, *Annie* in *Calendar Girls - The Musical*, *The Habit of Art*, *Queers*, *Lady Bracknell* in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Laramie Project*, *Into the Woods*, and she was one of the 'Actors' in Barry Purves' compelling production of *A Christmas Carol - A Ghost Story* last November. Earlier this year, Sarah played *Doctor Livesey* in the Garrick's staging of *Treasure Island* and *Mrs Spencer / Ensemble* in *Merrily We Roll Along*. Most recently, she gave a superb performance as *Mag Folan* in Mark Goggins' Garrick Studio staging of Martin McDonagh's compelling drama *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*.

Sarah is thrilled to be in the panto at last, and is having a blast working alongside such a brilliant company!



Beverley Stuart-Cole MOTHER NATURE

Beverley has been a member of the Garrick for 38 years, and has enjoyed a wide variety of roles. Previous shows include *Noises Off*, *Closer*, *Veronica's Room*, *Snake in the Grass*, *Comic Potential*, *Corrie!*, *An Inspector Calls*, *Crown Matrimonial*, *Annie*, *Run For Your*

Wife, *The Graduate*, *Calendar Girls*, *Twelfth Night*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *When The Rain Stops Falling*, *Jumpers for Goalposts*, and *Our Town*, playing the *Stage Manager*. Altrincham Garrick Studio credits include *Hitchcock Blonde*, *The Thrill of Love* and *Bette Davis* in *Bette and Joan*.

Earlier this year Beverley was simply unforgettable as *Anne*, the loving daughter of the man with dementia in *The Father*, while most recently she appeared as *Mrs Fairfax* and *Mrs Reed* in *Jane Eyre*.

Elsewhere, Beverley has appeared in *Say Who You Are* and *Murdered to Death* at Altrincham Little Theatre, and *Dead Guilty*, *A Kind of Alaska* and *Jesus Christ Superstar* at Sale Nomads.

Following last year's appearance as *Fairy Nuff* in *Sleeping Beauty*, Beverley is cock-a-hoop to be reunited with her wand and her glitter once more in her fifth panto fairy role at the Garrick!



Beanstalk Brain-Teasers

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

There are 20 differences between the 2 pictures. Can you get them all? Turn the next page to find the solution... but no peeking!



MAZE

Can you help Jack find his way up the beanstalk to where Princess Jill is wondering whether anyone will ever come to rescue her..?



WORD SEARCH

The resident Joker of Vegtaville cleverly hidden the names of several characters, places and things from the panto in the box (below). They might be spelt backwards, upside down, or running diagonally, upwards or downwards... See if you can find them all from the list (right). Good luck!

E	R	I	T	T	O	R	T	E	M	A	D	A	D
P	R	O	H	H	U	N	S	F	J	A	C	X	D
D	A	O	A	P	I	A	N	B	I	V	C	K	R
J	Q	R	B	K	M	K	G	D	L	W	A	F	A
A	P	E	E	R	C	H	S	E	L	F	S	F	W
M	A	A	A	A	E	A	G	I	A	N	T	E	D
Y	A	A	J	N	Z	D	G	S	S	W	L	E	E
W	L	G	K	Z	I	W	N	D	A	U	E	F	G
A	N	L	I	C	O	L	P	U	B	L	A	I	N
D	U	O	L	C	A	O	B	A	L	A	E	F	I
S	I	L	L	Y	S	I	M	O	N	B	D	O	K
F	F	A	U	Q	X	Y	H	U	G	V	C	F	N
S	X	L	B	E	A	N	S	T	A	L	K	U	G
E	R	U	T	A	N	R	E	H	T	O	M	M	H

NAME THOSE PANTOMIMES...

Can you name the following pantomimes, based upon these very short plot summaries? [Answers over the page...](#)

1. Proof that a pair of shoes can change your life.

2. You'll be Hooked on this Pan-to.

3. London calling... The Bells! The Bells!

4. Lonely pantomime island adventure.

5. Not too long or to short, this panto is just right.
6. Well-dressed feline feet.

7. Don't let her hair get all Tangled.

8. Arabian adventure with a huge cast.

9. A pretty ugly tale as old as time.

10. Fowl money-grabbing Matriarch.
11. The one that no-one can pronounce or spell.

12. Needs no strings to put this show on.

13. Many miniature men mining for mischief.

14. Does the King come a lot? No, not often.

15. Royal Lady likes Frozen whiteouts...



CONNECTIONS

Each of the boxes (right) features the name of a pantomime character... but they can be divided into four groups of four. Can you work out who goes with who, and why? [Answers over the page...](#)

AXE
BEANSTALK
BLUNDERBORE
CASTLE
CLOUD
DAME TROTT
FEEFIFO FUM
FLESHCREEP
GIANT
GOBLIN
HARP
JACK
JILL
KING EDWARD
MAGIC
MOTHER NATURE
SILLY SIMON

GROW YOUR OWN BEANSTALK!

- You will need:
- ◆ Empty glass jars.
 - ◆ A runner bean seed for each jar.
 - ◆ Lots of kitchen towel.
1. Soak the beans in cold water overnight.
 2. Fold two or three pieces of kitchen towel, then tuck the folded towel around the inside of a glass jar. Push a bean down between the glass and the kitchen towel, then add some water (enough to soak into the towel and keep the bean damp).
 3. Within a few days, you should see the beans start to grow. Keep watering them every 1-2 days.

Why not leave one jar without water and see whether the bean grows or not?

When your beans have roots and leaves, you can plant them in pots or directly into the ground. When they grow taller, they will need sticks or canes to support them.



DANDINI	WIDOW TWANKEY	KING RAT	NANA
DAISY	FLESHCREEP	ROBIN HOOD	UGLY SISTERS
ABANAZER	TOMMY	SARAH	BUTTONS
CAPTAIN HOOK	DAME TROTT	SIMPLE SIMON	PUSS

Performances at
1:30pm, 5:30pm
and 7:30pm.
Please contact the Box Office
for actual dates and times.

**Mildred
Hubble
spells
trouble!**



THE WORST WITCH

Adapted by
**Emma
Reeves**
from the original
books by
Jill Murphy

With music by
Luke Potter
Directed by
Kay Valentine

Before Harry Potter exploded onto the scene there was another seemingly ordinary child, Mildred Hubble, who wound up in the most extraordinary of places... A school for witches! Now its time for you to join the world of magic and mayhem at Altrincham Garrick Playhouse this Easter Holiday!

Currently in her final year at Miss Cackle's Academy, accident-prone Mildred and her fellow pupils are about to embark on their biggest adventure yet...

When Mildred and her friends decide to put on a play about their experiences as witches in training, mayhem inevitably ensues. Jealous Ethel Hallow is always out to spoil Mildred's fun. Stern Miss Hardbroom is opposed to all fun in general. Worst of all, an old enemy returns with a plan for revenge that could threaten not just the Academy, but the whole world.

Featuring all of Jill Murphy's beloved characters, this action-packed new stage adaptation by Emma Reeves includes original music, magic and a dose of Mildred's unique brand of utter pandemonium!

The Worst Witch premiered at Royal & Derngate, Northampton in 2019 and toured the UK before transferring to London's West End later that year. The production then went on to win the **Olivier Award for Best Family Show** in 2020!

Easter Entertainment? You know where to come... **BOOK YOUR SEATS TODAY!**

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



MAZE



WORD SEARCH



CONNECTIONS

DAISY, TOMMY, PUSS, NANA
PANTOMIME ANIMALS

NAME THOSE PANTOS...

1. Cinderella.
2. Peter Pan.
3. Dick Whittington.
4. Robinson Crusoe.
5. Goldilocks and the Three Bears.
6. Puss in Boots.
7. Rapunzel.
8. Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves.
9. Beauty and the Beast.
10. Mother Goose.
11. Rumpelstiltskin.
12. Pinocchio.
13. Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.
14. King Arthur.
15. The Snow Queen.



The Garrick Academy of Performing Arts (**GAPA**) is a theatre company that welcomes young people, aged 5 to 18, who are interested in the theatre, or performing arts (on or off stage), and want to have **FUN!**



Every Saturday we run a range of sessions for students, including workshops, exercises and rehearsals. We introduce our pupils to a range of stage skills that will enable them to take part in, and contribute to, our main productions.

Each student will learn, develop, gain confidence, and select the disciplines they wish to focus on. There are also other opportunities for students to perform at the Garrick Playhouse, and work behind the scenes.



If students want to pursue a career in the Performing Arts our trained, qualified staff can provide them with a solid foundation that they can build on in their theatrical future. If students want to have fun and meet their friends, then GAPA is also the perfect place to come, too!



WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Join us now by booking your place with our Box Office, or email us at academy@altrinchamgarrick.co.uk



it's
**great
active
positive
amazing**



**Thursday 23 – Sunday 26 October
and Wednesday 29 October
– Sunday 2 November 2025**

Please contact the Box Office for full details of dates and performance times



Music by **Marc Shaiman**

Lyrics by **Scott Wittman & Marc Shaiman**

Book by **David Greig**

Based on the novel by **Roald Dahl** and the Warner Bros. film

Directed by **Joseph Meighan**

**The world-famous Willy Wonka is opening
the gates to his mysterious factory...
but only to a lucky few!**



Charlie Bucket,
an imaginative boy
with a knack for making something out of nothing, dreams of
acquiring a golden ticket to tour Willy Wonka's magical chocolate
factory and can't believe his luck when it actually happens! Fellow
contest winners: Veruca Salt, Violet Beauregarde, Mike Teavee,
and Augustus Gloop, have no idea what they're getting them-
selves into, as they each learn valuable lessons from Mr. Wonka.
Nobody leaves the same way that they arrived...

Discover a magical world full of amazement, innovation, sugary
treats, and, of course, Oompa-Loompas!

Based on the famous novel by Roald Dahl, **Charlie and the
Chocolate Factory** features an original score from the multi
award-winning songwriters of **Hairspray** (Music by Marc Shaiman
with Lyrics by Shaiman and Scott Wittman and a Book by David
Greig), blended with songs from the 1971 motion picture including
**"Candy Man," "I've Got a Golden Ticket," "The Oompa Loompa
Song,"** and **"Pure Imagination"** (Leslie Bricusse & Anthony Newley).

**Get your GOLDEN ticket to a world
of pure imagination! ON SALE NOW!**

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International. All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI.

A rip-**ROAR**ing panto **FUR** all the family!

GOLDILOCKS
AND THE THREE
BEARS

Laughs, music, dance, special effects, dazzling costumes, stunning sets, circus tricks and bundles of audience participation...

The excitement
is **in TENTS!**

Friday 5
December 2025 –
Sunday 4
January 2026

Performance times vary –
contact Box Office
for full details

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garrick
playhouse

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