

HOUSE OF GHOSTS

by Alma Cullen



Monday 23 –
Saturday 28 May 2022



Altrincham Garrick
PLAYHOUSE



Photos: Martin Ogden



Praise too, to the production team, for excellent support in set, props and costumes, with brilliant song selections.. NorthWestEnd.com

A good production of a very enjoyable play, **and the audience loved it!**



Thalia Terpsichore
Number9



...the Garrick has certainly given us a winning performance!

NorthWestEnd.com

WELCOME

...to Altrincham Garrick Playhouse, and our penultimate production of our 2021-22 Season, Alma Cullen's *House of Ghosts*.

From Sherlock Holmes to Miss Marple and from Hercule Poirot to Vera, we all love a good murder! We rise to the challenge of pitting our wits against these fictional characters (and their authors), working out the twists and turns of the plot, spotting the red herrings, and enduring the cliffhangers and mind games that keep us in suspense to try and guess 'whodunnit' before the final reveal... Thrillers and murder-mystery plays have always been popular with British theatre audiences, and some of the best of that genre have enjoyed long, long runs. While *The Mousetrap* may not be one of Agatha Christie's best, the production at St. Martin's Theatre in London is still packing in the tourists after seventy years, although you wonder whether it's the novelty value of seeing a play that's been on for decades, is the main attraction, rather than the production itself. In the second half of the twentieth century, plays like Ira Levin's *Deathtrap*, Anthony Shaffer's *Sleuth*, *Wait Until Dark* and the often-revived *Dial M For Murder* - both written by Frederick Knott - were hugely popular, yet (except for the latter) none of them seem to be staged particularly often these days. It seems that writers of these kinds of drama concentrate their efforts on the small screens these days, for a much greater financial reward than the theatre could offer.

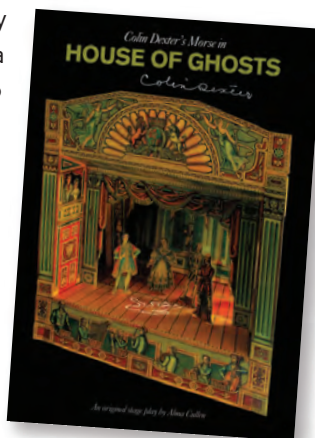
It's heartening, then, to see characters from an immensely popular crime series on television being used in drama specifically written for the stage, from the pen of a writer who crafted several episodes of that multi-award-winning drama. Alma Cullen has also rather brilliantly used one of the greatest murder-mysteries of all time - William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* - to base her compelling drama around. Given the high esteem in which Colin Dexter's characters are still held, it's quite surprising, then, that this play has not been staged more regularly. The programme (right) is from Calibre Productions' national tour in 2010, which featured former 'Doctor Who' Colin Baker as Morse. Baroque Theatre Company also toured a small-scale production in 2015, while BBC Radio 4 produced a version two years later with Neil Pearson in the main role. Consequently we're delighted to be able to present a relatively unseen murder-mystery. We sincerely hope you have a really enjoyable evening and recommend coming to the Garrick this week to friends, relatives, neighbours... but please don't give the ending away!

Later in this programme you will find details of our planned productions for September 2022 until January 2023. Building upon the success of this season, we've once again put together a season that definitely offers 'something for everyone', from compelling modern drama to classic comedy, one of the best musicals ever written, and not forgetting our hugely popular pantomime. Additionally, in our Studio theatre we'll be presenting a series of funny, heart-breaking, joyous, tender, gripping, hugely entertaining plays linked by an LGBTQ+ theme. Tickets for all of these productions are now on sale from our Box Office or online, and - cliché time! - we really do recommend that you book early to avoid disappointment!

I sincerely hope you enjoy today's performance. Thank you for joining us, and we hope to see you back at the Garrick soon. Whether it's to see a show, taking part in a workshop or Community event, creating your own work, or simply stopping by to share time with friends, you're always welcome.

Joe

Joseph Meighan Artistic Director, Altrincham Garrick Playhouse.



**Altrincham Garrick
PLAYHOUSE**

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THE GREATEST CRIME DRAMA

In a poll conducted by Radio Times in 2018, nearly two decades after it finished its original run on ITV, Inspector Morse was named as 'the Greatest British Crime Drama of all time'.

The Oxford-based whodunnit - which starred John Thaw and Kevin Whately - came to an end in 2000, but is still remembered fondly by the public, who placed it above such current hits as *Line of Duty* and *Happy Valley*.

Speaking about the lasting appeal of the curmudgeonly Morse, Whately - who played sidekick Sergeant Lewis - said: "What viewers love is the fact that Morse isn't your usual hero. He's lonely, boozy, angry, but very bright. And he's a match for all those supercilious Oxford brains."

Morse's appeal was further evidenced in the poll, with prequel series *Endeavour* taking fourth place and spin-off *Lewis* ending up in 12th position.

Inspector Morse debuted in January 1987 with three 120-minute adaptations of Colin Dexter's original novels and was an instant success for ITV, its ratings reaching a peak of 18 million during the mid-1990s and worldwide figures now estimated at one billion across 200 countries.



Above: John Thaw as Inspector Morse and Kevin Whately as Sergeant Lewis.

But its format was a risk for the broadcaster, with audiences of the day used to police dramas that rarely exceeded an hour-long slot. Speaking about the pre-production pressures faced by the Morse team, Whately said: "We were all nervous. A lot of people's careers were riding on it. Ted Childs, who was the executive producer, was told, 'You'd better get this right. But the first script was by Anthony Minghella (who went on to adapt *The English Patient* for the big screen) and it was a real humdinger."

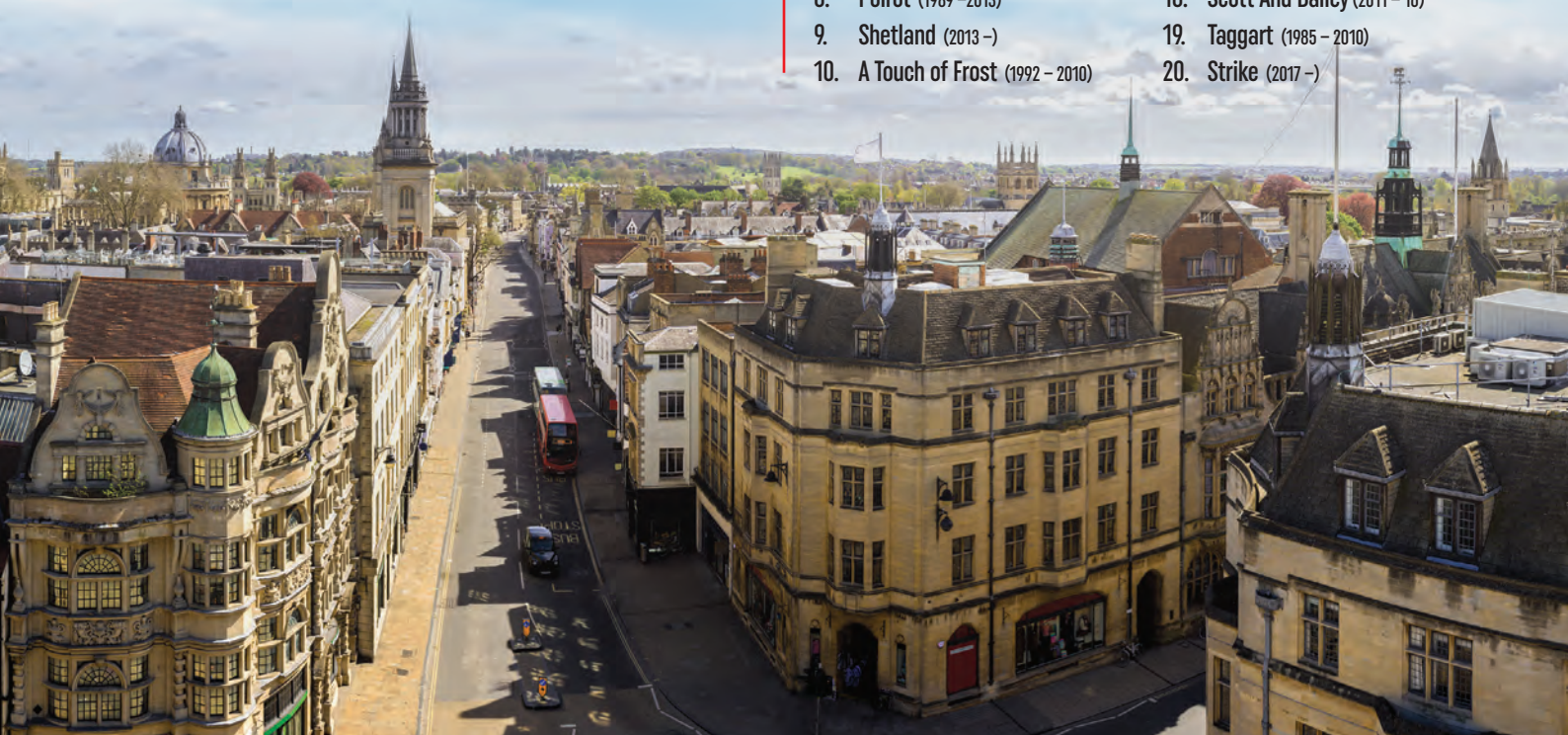
"And we were also lucky in that the British film industry had just collapsed for the umpteenth time, so we got a lot of top technicians on board. It was all shot on film and we effectively made them like movies."

The Radio Times poll, which received over 10,000 votes, asked readers to choose their favourite British TV crime of all time from a list of 50 programmes that spanned the last seven decades.

As well as Dexter's creation, Agatha Christie's most famous characters also featured in the top 10, with Joan Hickson's *Miss Marple* at seven and David Suchet's *Hercule Poirot* at eight. Crime writer Ann Cleeves also proved herself to be hugely popular, with *Vera* (sixth) and *Shetland* (nine) both getting a high ranking.

Overall, the BBC had 24 spots in the list - which ran to 50 in total - while ITV claimed 25. *Hinterland*, which was 28th, was screened first by Welsh-language channel S4C.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <i>Inspector Morse</i> (1987-2000) | 11. <i>Midsomer Murders</i> (1997 -) |
| 2. <i>Foyle's War</i> (2002-15) | 12. <i>Lewis</i> (2006-15) |
| 3. <i>Line of Duty</i> (2012 -) | 13. <i>Prime Suspect</i> (1991 - 2006) |
| 4. <i>Endeavour</i> (2012 -) | 14. <i>New Tricks</i> (2003 - 15) |
| 5. <i>Happy Valley</i> (2014 -) | 15. <i>Broadchurch</i> (2013 -17) |
| 6. <i>Vera</i> (2011 -) | 16. <i>Inspector George Gently</i> (2006 - 17) |
| 7. <i>Miss Marple</i> (1984 -1992) | 17. <i>Life On Mars</i> (2006 - 07) |
| 8. <i>Poirot</i> (1989 -2013) | 18. <i>Scott And Bailey</i> (2011 - 16) |
| 9. <i>Shetland</i> (2013 -) | 19. <i>Taggart</i> (1985 - 2010) |
| 10. <i>A Touch of Frost</i> (1992 - 2010) | 20. <i>Strike</i> (2017 -) |



COLIN DEXTER

Although he laid his famous character to rest over 20 years ago, Colin Dexter OBE is still fondly remembered for bringing the stories of Inspector Morse to both the literary and the television world - and subsequently once into the world of theatre.

The timeless success of the Morse tales is proved in the string of prizes Dexter continued to receive into his later years, from The Golden Dagger Award for the crime novel of the year in 1989, and again in 1992, to the Crime Writers' Association lifetime achievement award - the Diamond Dagger - awarded in 1997 for his body of work.

A gracious and humble winner, he told The Guardian after being presented with the 2012 Theakstons Old Peculier Outstanding Contribution to Crime Fiction award: *"Never had I thought that the gods would be kindly enough to give me such a huge honour so late in my life. Yet here I am, in my early 80s, feeling a profound and heartfelt gratitude for the great honour bestowed on me."*

After a career that saw him pen 33 stories since his first novel, *Last Bus To Woodstock*, in 1975, Dexter killed off Morse in *The Remorseful Day*, telling despairing fans at the time: *"I think I can state quite categorically that there's not going to be any resurrection from the dead or anything - that's it."*

But while he spent a generation alongside the curmudgeonly character, he said that personal similarities with the opera-loving bachelor stretched little further than their shared love for a pint of bitter and a modest, no-frills lifestyle.

"The only thing that was really important to me about Morse was that he was very sensitive and rather vulnerable."

"I've never had a very good visual imagination. I never had anyone in mind. If you write in the first person, it's always going to be little semi-autobiographical."

Norman Colin Dexter was born in Stamford, Lincolnshire on 29 September 1930. His father Alfred was a taxi driver, who also ran a small garage and motor accessories store, and his mother Dorothy helped in the shop.

Dexter attended Bluecoat Junior School before winning a scholarship to Stamford School. Having graduated, he completed his National Service with the Royal Corps of Signals before reading classics at Cambridge University's Christ's College.

In 1956 he married Dorothy Cooper, a physiotherapist from North Wales, and Oxford became their home in the 1960s when was appointed senior assistant secretary to the Oxford University Delegacy of Local Examinations. He retired in 1988, mainly due to ill health, but - having started penning *Last Bus To Woodstock*, his first novel, during a rainy holiday in Wales in 1972, publishing it in 1975 - by then he was firmly established as one of the best thriller writers of his generation.

Dexter was a passionate crossword compiler (under the name 'Codex') who made the puzzles synonymous with the fictional world



of Inspector Morse, often deploying them as a mental aid to help the detective on the path to catching a killer.

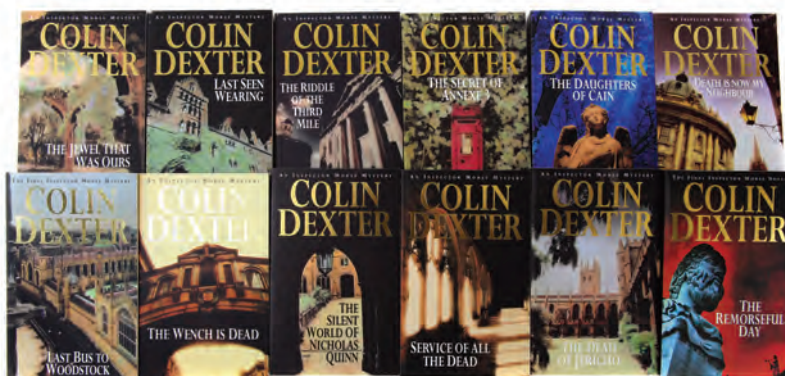
"Murder mysteries are like crossword clues in that the setter seeks to obscure their intention and actively misdirect the solver from the truth. That's part of the reason why crosswords appeal to Endeavour. Plus they are, for the most part, a solitary pursuit."

He also named his great detective after Sir Jeremy Morse, a long-standing friend and crossword compiler. Morse's sidekick Lewis was also named after another crossword professional, Mrs B Lewis, who wrote the Everyman puzzle in the Observer.

Dexter spoke openly of the crossword-solving sleuth as a man he would happily have a drink with. When the writer was awarded an OBE in 2000, recognising his charity work as well as his literary legacy, he told the Press Association: *"I think Morse, if he had really existed and was still alive, would probably say to me, 'well, you didn't do me too bad a service in your writing'."*

"He might say, 'I wish you'd made me a slightly less miserable blighter and slightly more generous, and you could have painted me in a little bit of a better light'."

"If he had bought me a drink, a large Glenfiddich or something, that would have been very nice, but knowing him I doubt he would have done - Lewis always bought all the drinks."



Dexter also became a big fan and close friend of John Thaw, describing him as a perfect fit for the role and reportedly declaring in his will that no other actor should ever be allowed to play the part.

But Dexter did loosen the reins when it came to other cast members on the show. He regularly appeared in cameo roles in episodes of both *Inspector Morse* and its' follow-up, *Lewis*, continuing the tradition into the first series of *Endeavour*.

Colin Dexter died on 21 March 2017 at his home in Banbury Road, Oxford. But his characters - and his value to his adopted city - live on. By the time the final episode of *Inspector Morse* was broadcast it was estimated the franchise was generating £250m a year for the city in tourism. And today, Morse-themed tours continue to run throughout the city of dreaming spires and its environs.

MORSE

Morse was born on 9 September 1930. From his mother's Quakerism and his father's passion for Captain James Cook, he was christened 'Endeavour' - a good and virtuous Quaker moniker and the name of the ship that carried Cook on his first voyage of discovery. Morse would later claim that his name was simply Morse, or, if you insisted, you could call him by his christian name - 'Inspector'.

Morse's parents divorced when he was 12 and he remained with his mother until her death 3 years later, when he had to return to his father. He had a poor relationship with his stepmother, Gwen, and claimed he only read poetry to annoy her. He has a half-sister, Joyce, with whom he is on better terms, and was devastated when Joyce's daughter Marilyn committed suicide.

He attended a public school - Stamford - where he acquired the nickname 'Pagan' due to his reticence to reveal his given name.

Although details of Morse's early life are vague, it is hinted that as a schoolboy he won a scholarship to study at St John's College, Oxford. He lost the scholarship as the result of poor academic performance, which in turn resulted from a failed love affair. Forced to leave the University, he entered the Army, from where he joined the Police. He often reflects on renowned scholars (such as A. E. Housman) who, like himself, failed to get academic degrees from Oxford.

Considered by some to be a late example of the 'gentleman detective' he is an embodiment of white, male, upper-middle-class Englishness, with a set of prejudices and assumptions to match. His background is the antithesis of that of his Welsh-born assistant, Lewis.

Morse is pedantic and micro-critical (as shown by his penchant for pointing out spelling mistakes in just about every document sent to him), and his patronising manner towards women has led to accusations of misogyny. He claims that "there is a 50 per cent chance that the last person to see the victim alive was the murderer". In reality it is the pathologists who deduce, while Morse uses immense intuition and his fantastic memory to get to the killer.

Morse is addicted to cryptic crosswords; he is a connoisseur of real ale, music - especially opera and Wagner - poetry and art. He drives an iconic English car, and exudes a weariness of the crassness of the modern age that surrounds him. In a way he is a man out of his time.

ALMA CULLEN

Playwright, House of Ghosts

Alma Cullen was a subtle, powerful and much-admired writer of drama for film and television, radio and theatre, whose characteristic combination of sharp, ironic humour, deep human

understanding, and sheer dramatic skill won her the affection and deep admiration of audiences, friends and colleagues across the UK.

Alma had tremendous empathy and concerns for children growing up in poverty, emanating from her own childhood. She was born Alma Fitzpatrick in Prescot, Merseyside, in 1938, the daughter of Frank Fitzpatrick, a factory worker (who lost his job after a severe industrial injury), and his wife, Elsie, a shop assistant. She did well academically, and although she longed to go to university, she left school at 16 to work in a bank, hoping that her wages would help the family finances. In 1960 she married James Cullen, a botanist, and they settled in Wirral before moving to Edinburgh in 1972, by which time Alma had gone to University, gaining a degree in English at Liverpool in 1970 before obtaining a Masters at Edinburgh University in 1974.

Her first break came when her first play, *A Glimpse Into The Interior*, was produced by the legendary Leeds-based BBC drama producer Alfred Bradley. Soon after came scripts for Granada Television: *The Caledonian Cascade* (1977) and *A Hardy Breed of Girl* (1978). For the BBC she wrote a film, *Kay*, the same year, and the following one *A Degree of Uncertainty* for the Play for Today series. *Northern Lights* - set during the Edinburgh Festival, and starring Judy Parfitt and a young Rik Mayall (STV, 1982) - was shortlisted for an Emmy award, and *Off Peak* (STV, 1984) was the winner of the silver medal at the New York TV festival. Her four-part drama series, *Intimate Contact* (ITV, 1987), starring Daniel Massey and Claire Bloom, was among the first to depict the Aids crisis.

Alma and James moved to Cambridge in the late 1980s. Despite her success she was modest, but no pushover. When she and James attended high table at a college the fellows directed their comments to James, ignoring her. When she finally got into the conversation it was, "Oh, and what is it you do?" "I'm a writer," she replied. "Oh? Well that can't pay much," a fellow chortled. "£30,000 the last script," came the riposte. With academia not noted for its great pay, the smirk fell off his face.

Her screenwriting credits included the 1990s Edinburgh-based legal series *The Advocates*, episodes of *Inspector Morse* and *A Touch Of Frost*, and many single plays and dramas. In the 90s she also adapted works by Agatha Christie, Joanna Trollope and Joan Smith for the screen. In the late 80s and early 90s, working on Morse, she shared the Writers' Guild award for best original drama two years in a row in 1991 and 1992. Her TV film *All the King's Men*, starring David Jason and Dame Maggie Smith, won the former a best actor award in 2000.

When James died in 2013, she moved back to Edinburgh and returned to her earlier passion of stage and radio, writing plays for the Oran Mor theatre, touring *House of Ghosts* and writing Morse for Radio 4. She continued to work and write to the end, with plays staged at *A Play, A Pie And A Pint* in 2019 and early in 2020.

Alma was also a supportive and much-valued mentor to many young writers; and in her private life, she was much loved by friends and colleagues as a tremendously witty, well-informed and hospitable presence in their lives, with a lifelong passion for theatre, music, good books, and good company.

Alma Cullen died on 7 August 2021 in Edinburgh. She is survived by her son Patrick and daughter Rose, and by her four much-loved granddaughters; as well as by hundreds of friends and colleagues whose lives were deeply touched by the quality of her writing and of her friendship.



MORSE MUSIC

Last year, listeners to Classic FM voted Barrington Pheloung's iconic, haunting theme tune to *Inspector Morse* as the most popular television theme tune of all time. The survey had been carried out twice before, in 2016 and 2019, and the *Inspector Morse* theme always appeared in the top five.

The dark, hypnotic tune also employs a Morse Code theme for the letters that spell the name M.O.R.S.E.. The Australian-born composer, who died of respiratory failure aged 65 in 2019, shared several interests with Colin Dexter's detective in the eponymous ITV crime drama, including a love of opera and cryptic crosswords. He became known for hiding clues and red herrings in the score for the series, and occasionally revealing the killer's identity in Morse code.

The classical-inspired melancholy score earned the composer global acclaim and a 1992 BAFTA Award nomination for best original music. Pheloung attributed its success to the show's unconventional two-hour time slot, which allowed him to write more intricate musical cues. He also composed the themes for the sequel, *Lewis*, and the prequel, *Endeavour*.

Barrington Somers Pheloung - known as "Barry" - was born on 10 May 1954 in Manly, New South Wales. Having begun his musical career playing R&B guitar in nightclubs, it was when he discovered the music of Bach in his late teens that everything changed.

Pheloung moved to London in 1972 to study guitar under the great guitarists John Williams and Julian Bream at the Royal College of Music. He also studied composition with John Lambert, and conducting, and in his second year, received his first commission for a ballet score.

His film work included *Hilary and Jackie* (1998), based on the life of the great cellist Jacqueline du Pré, for which he was nominated for the *Anthony Asquith Award for Film Music* at the 52nd British Academy Film Awards. Other works include the music for *Truly, Madly, Deeply* (1990, in which he also appeared), *Twin Dragons* (1992), *Shopping* (1994), *Nostradamus* (1994), *The Mangler* (1995), *Touching Wild Horses* (2002), *Shopgirl* (2005), *Little Fugitive* (2006) and *A Previous Engagement* (2008). He also composed the scores to Revolution Software's adventure games *In Cold Blood* and three *Broken Sword* video games.

Pheloung's other work included music for the Sydney Opera House's Twentieth Birthday Celebrations. He composed the incidental music for the first series of *Boon*. In 2009 he composed the music for 1983, the concluding episode of the Channel 4 drama series *Red Riding*.

But it is for his work on *Inspector Morse* that Barry will be most remembered. Responding to his theme song winning the award, his widow, Heather Pheloung, said that he would have been "overjoyed and honoured that the *Inspector Morse* theme has been chosen as the UK's number one favourite TV theme of all time".

"For Barry, writing music was a way he could bring joy and love to people, his music came from the heart, and composing music and bringing it to life with his colleagues and friends was his passion."

To hear the theme tune in full, go online to

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u20sVtCxf_8

MORSE CODE

Morse Code was invented in the United States by American artist and inventor Samuel F.B. Morse during the 1830s. It was used to send 'text' messages across America using the existing telegraph wires. However, soon after its introduction in Europe, it became apparent that the original Morse Code was inadequate for the transmission of much non-English text, since it lacked codes for letters with accents. To remedy this, International Morse Code was devised by a conference of European nations in 1851.

The International Morse Code uses dots and dashes of constant length rather than the variable lengths (and pauses) used in the original Morse Code, and - except for some minor changes in 1938 - remained the same since its inception. The American telegraph industry never abandoned the original Morse Code, and so its use continued until the spread of teleprinters in the 1920s and '30s.



A vintage Morse Code transmitter.

A	• —	N	— •	1	• — — — —
B	— • • •	O	— — — —	2	• • — — —
C	— • — •	P	• — — •	3	• • • — —
D	— • •	Q	— — • —	4	• • • • —
E	•	R	• — •	5	• • • • •
F	• • — •	S	• • •	6	— • • • •
G	— — •	T	— — —	7	— — — • •
H	• • • •	U	• • —	8	— — — • •
I	• •	V	• • • —	9	— — — — •
J	• — — —	W	• — —	0	— — — — —
K	— • —	X	— • • —	?	• • — — • •
L	• — • •	Y	— • • — —	!	— • • — —
M	— —	Z	— — • •	.	• • • — —
				,	— — • • — —
				;	— • — — • •
				:	— — — • • •
				+	• • — — • •
				-	— • • • •
				/	— • • — •
				=	— • • — —

International Morse Code was used in World War II and in the Korean and Vietnam wars. It was used heavily by the shipping industry and for the safety of the seas up until the early 1990s.

Although amateur radio made up only a small part of Morse Code usage, it did prepare many hundreds of operators for military duty in communications.

But since the early 2000s, with the spread of mobile phone and international communications technology, Morse Code has become a little-used 'period-piece' that is mostly heard nowadays as a beeping noise in movies, TV dramas and plays set in and around the Second World War...

THE JAG!

In the first of Colin Dexter's novels, Morse's car was a classic Lancia. However, John Thaw, who had played Jack Regan on *The Sweeney* (1974), which featured a lot of Jaguars as villains' getaway cars, insisted that Inspector Morse would have driven an iconic British car, and never an Italian sports car. Dexter was so impressed with this reasoning that he asked his publishers to change "Lancia" to "Jaguar" in all subsequent reprints of his novels.

The appearance of the classic burgundy Jaguar Mark II introduced a whole new generation to a beautifully designed car.

The Jaguar Mark II was first built in 1959 at their Coventry plant in the United Kingdom and launched as a mid-size luxury executive car. Initially available to buy for £1,534/0/-, Morse's Jag is a 2.4 litre, twin overhead-cam, 6-cylinder engine delivering 120 bhp. The top speed was registered at 119.9 m.p.h. and it could get to 62 m.p.h. from standing in 11.9 seconds. The Mark II was available with either a 2.4, 3.4 or 3.8 litre engine, with the later capable of accelerating from 0-60 mph in 8.5 seconds and a top speed of 125 mph. The Mark II was designed to be an example of 'grace, pace and space'. Between 1959 and 1967, 83,980 Mark II Jaguar cars were produced, with another 7,246 240 and 340 models built between 1967 and 1969.



According to Kevin Whateley, John Thaw claimed that he had witnessed the vintage Jaguar that his title character used being written off several times in *The Sweeney* (1974). Apparently, it was, in real-life, a "polished up wreck", and the reason Thaw was frequently seen in close-up driving the vehicle was that it was being towed because it had broken down.

The car used in the TV series has had a volatile history. It was bought by Carlton TV in 1987 where it remained until the series came to an end in 2000. The following year the keys were handed to lawyer James Went, 25, who had won the vehicle in a competition. Although Mr Went said that he was determined to drive the car rather than sell it, he soon sold it on. John Potts, the company director who bought the car, was subsequently jailed for five years after conning investors out of £80 million. Potts was chairman of a buy-to-let company which funded his extravagant lifestyle by fleecing up to 1,750 clients. He squandered their money on antiques, expensive suits, jewellery, shotguns, and horse racing... and the vintage red Jaguar, which he bought for £53,000.

More recently, the car has been restored to its former glory and publicly displayed by it's (private) owner at Jaguar Mark II events.

THE CREATIVES

Director Mike Shaw

Designer Barry Purves

Stage Manager Cliff Mills

Front of House Manager Neill Walker

ASMs Helen Sallabank

..... Tracy Mitchell

Prompt Anne O'Reilly

Lighting Stephan van Zyl

..... Geoff Scullard

Sound Christine Mills

Properties David Ades

Wardrobe Mike Shaw

Assisted by Stella Blackburn

..... Dallas Bradshaw, Betty Farmer

..... Helen Phillips, Lynne Saleh

..... Julie Shaw, Noel Watson

Scenic Artists Amanda Cooke

..... Ruth Stocks, Jane Milner

..... Charlotte Leigh, Carol Birtwistle

..... Rob Robinson

Production Carpenter Steve Cox

Set Construction Dave Bailey

..... Barry Borgen, Steve Cox

..... Paul Downham, Bob Green

..... Phil Gleave, Drew Lightfoot

..... Mark McEwan, Andy McHugh

..... Nick McKie, Trevor McKie

..... John Murphy, Peter Nelson

..... Steve Rigg, Paul Simpson

Rehearsal & Production Photography

..... Martin Ogden

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

THE CAST

Chief Inspector **Morse** **Jonathan Black**
Thames Valley C.I.D.

Detective Sergeant **Lewis** **Andrew Higson**
Thames Valley C.I.D., Assistant to Morse

Superintendent **Strange** **Wayne Holt**
Thames Valley Police

Lawrence **Baxter** **Stewart Mathers**
A Theatre Director

Paul **Kincaid** **Jonathan Barker**
A Catholic Priest

Philip **Woolf** **Matthew Foster**
A Stage Manager

Justin **Harris** **Tom Broughton**
An Actor

Freddie **Malveno** **Loui Quelcutti**
An Actor

Ellen **Underwood** **Sarat Broughton**
Prof. History, Oxon.

Verity **Carr** **Jacque Hamilton**
An Actress

Harriet **Baxter** **Mandy White**
Wife to Lawrence

Grace **Friel** **Adele Higson**
A former College Servant

Rebecca **Downey** **Ciara Booker**
An Actress

The action of the play takes place in 1987 in the Theatre in Oxford, and other neighbouring locations.

There will be one interval of twenty minutes.

We request that all mobile phones are put into silent mode, or switched off. The taking of photographs, or any kind of filming or recording of the production, is strictly prohibited. Thank-you.



THE COMPANY



JONATHAN BLACK

Chief Inspector Morse

Jonathan once again is delighted to be back on the main stage in this production of **Present Laughter** after recently appearing as one of the *Alan Bennetts* in *The Lady In The Van* earlier this season.

Jonathan started his Garrick journey back in 1981 appearing in *Privates On Parade*. Through the years other appearances include *Juno And The Paycock*, *A View From The Bridge*, *Whipping It Up*, *Out Of Order*, *Shady Business*, *Anne of A Thousand Days*, *Pack Of Lies*, *Run For Your Wife*, *And Then There Were None*, *Noises Off*, *Two into One*, *Gaslight*, *It Runs In The Family*, *Wolf Hall* and *Business Affairs*. He has also experienced working in TV productions such as *Emmerdale*, *Hollyoaks*, *Coronation Street*, *Cold Feet*, *Clocking Off* and *A Touch Of Frost*.

"As a lot of you will know, comedy and farce are my guilty pleasure, but every now and then it's important for me to spread my wings and do some serious stuff. *House Of Ghosts* is no exception. Being in this production has been an absolute pleasure! Although being a drama, we've had a lot of fun and laughter rehearsing. I hope you enjoy it as much as we have."

Jonathan lives in Hale with his wife and children, who are regular supporters at The Garrick Theatre, and has very much enjoyed working once again with Mike Shaw as Director.



ANDREW HIGSON

Detective Sergeant Lewis

Andrew has been a member of the Garrick Theatre since 1995 and appeared in numerous productions on main stage. Favourite productions include *The Vicar of Dibley*, *Abigail's Party*, *The Ritz*, *Return to the Forbidden Planet*, *La Cage aux Folles*, *Bronte* and *Jeeves and Wooster*. And in the Lauriston Studio, plays

include *Greek* and *The Visitor*. Andrew was also one of the first to perform in *JB Shorts*, now established as a major highlight of acting entertainment in Manchester.



WAYNE HOLT

Superintendent Strange

Having returned to the Garrick for the review *Curtain Up*, and then ruled under the sea as *King Triton* in last October's stunning staging of *The Little Mermaid*, Wayne then played both Mr. Darling and Captain Hook in *Peter Pan*. Previous roles with the Garrick include

Abanazer in *Aladdin*, Old Deuteronomy in *Cats*, Sweeney in *Sweeney Todd*, Count Carl Magnus in *A Little Night Music*, Miles Gloriosus in *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum*, Jabez Clegg in *The Manchester Man*, Captain Tempest in *Return to the Forbidden Planet* and Bob Cratchett in *Scrooge*. Other roles have included Javert in *Les Misérables*, and in Opera (Escamillo in *Carmen*, Papageno in *The Magic Flute*, Zaccariah in *Nabucco*, Belcore in *The Elixir Of Love* and Amonasro in *Aida*) and G & S (Koko in *The Mikado*, The Sergeant in *The Pirates Of Penzance*, The Bosun in *HMS Pinafore*, Lord Mountararat in *Iolanthe*).



STEWART MATHERS

Lawrence Baxter

Stewart is an Actor and Commercial Model and has worked for leading brands such as Mercedes-Benz, Lexus, Subaru, Mappin & Web, Hotel Gotham and Hackett London.

He has also featured in a number of TV commercials, programmes and films, as well as performing in many theatre productions in Manchester, The Lowry Theatre and at The Joseph Rowntree Theatre in York.

Stewart made his debut at The Garrick Playhouse last year in *A Streetcar Named Desire* playing 'Steve Hubbell'. He is very much looking forward to bringing 'Lawrence Baxter' to life!



JONATHAN BARKER

Paul Kincaid

Jonathan trained at Guildford School of Acting and at the London Studio Centre. As an actor, singer and dancer he has performed as *Theseus* and *Lysander* in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Guildford Castle and in *A Chorus Line* and *Nine* in London's West End, as well as

in productions of *A Doll's House*, *The Rimers Of Eldrich*, *La Ronde*, *Absurd Person Singular*, *When We Are Married*, *Last Tango In Whitby*, *Watch It, Sailor!* and the musicals *Barnum*, *Fiddler On The Roof*, *Guys & Dolls*, *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, *La Cage Aux Folles*, *Chicago*, *The Good Companions*, *Oklahoma!*, *Brigadoon*, *Camelot*, *Follies*, *The Boy Friend* and *The Gingerbread Man* around the UK. On TV he has appeared in *Dead Gorgeous* for Carlton TV. He sings on the original London concert recording of the musical *Nine*.

His recent directing work includes the European premiere of Mark Twain's *Is He Dead?* as well as productions of *Coram Boy*, *A Few Good Men*, *Our Country's Good*, *The Laramie Project*, *Judgment Day*, *Hot Mikado*, *The Front Page*, *Privates On Parade*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Biloxi Blues*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and two brand new plays *Parzival* and *Their Night With Pete* for Eton College. Other directing, choreography and musical directing work includes *Assassins*, *The Canterbury Tales*, *Daisy Pulls It Off*, *Jason and the Argonauts*, *Oh What A Lovely War*, *Follies*, *Oliver!* and *Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor® Dreamcoat*.

Jonathan is thrilled to be in his first production for the Altrincham Garrick Playhouse since moving to Manchester.



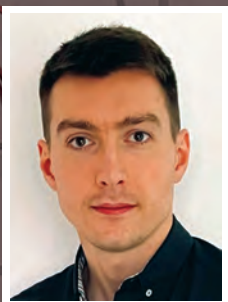
MATTHEW FOSTER

Philip Woolf

Matthew's roles at the Garrick include *Kurt* in *Business Affairs*, *Geoffrey* in *Absurd Person Singular*, *George Reynolds* in *Up and Coming*, *Edmund* in *A Murder is Announced* and *Alex* in *Outside Edge* and, last October, *Rufus* in *The Lady In The Van*. Matthew has also played *The*

Narrator in *Joseph & His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* and *Bill Sikes* in *Oliver!* for the Bromley Churchill Youth Theatre. Other credits include *A Man for All Seasons*, *Huis Clos* and *Loot* for Stirling University Theatre. He has also directed Harold Pinter's *A Kind of Alaska* for the Scottish Student Drama Festival and appeared in *A View from a Bridge* for the Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh.

Having recently moved down to Oxfordshire, where he quickly found a new home by playing *Monty* in *Made In Dagenham* for Abingdon Operatic Society in April, sadly for us this is likely to be Matthew's final appearance on the Altrincham Garrick Playhouse's stage... but never say never!

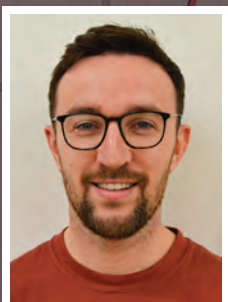


TOM BROUGHTON

Justin Harris

Tom is delighted to be making his fifth appearance at the Altrincham Garrick Playhouse in *House of Ghosts*. Tom made his Garrick debut in September 2021 in the musical revue *Curtain Up*, performing *Suddenly Seymour* from *Little Shop of Horrors*. This was followed by the roles of *Young*

Collector/Doctor in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Dr Spivey* in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, before making his debut in the Lauriston Studio as *Yves Montand* in *Piaf*. Prior to making his Garrick debut Tom's theatrical credits included *Tom Collins* in *Rent* and *Billy* in Shelagh Stephenson's *Five Kinds of Silence*. Tom has also performed at Manchester's Contact Theatre, including leading a stage adaptation of Xue Xinran's non-fiction epic *Sky Burial*.



LOUI QUELCUTTI

Freddie Malveno

Loui is making his second appearance at the Altrincham Garrick Playhouse this year, having previously appeared as *Dale Harding* in the Garrick Ensemble's acclaimed production of *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* in February. Before that, Loui has performed in productions

across the North West, including *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Bacchae* and *The American Dream*. He is delighted to be back at the Garrick, working with such a group of talented people in *House of Ghosts*.



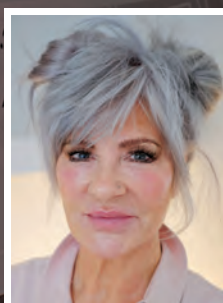
SARAT BROUGHTON

Ellen Underwood

Sarat has been a member of The Garrick for 25 years and has been in numerous productions over the years at the theatre, the last one being *My Mother Said I Never Should* in October 2019. Sarat has also been a member of the Casting Committee and assisted with Front Of

House duties in the past. Sarat has taught Drama and LAMDA for many years and is an Examiner for LAMDA in the UK and overseas.

She is delighted to be performing once again at the theatre after the challenges of the past two years.



JACQUE HAMILTON

Verity Carr

Having moved 'Up North' from Leicestershire recently, Jacque made her Garrick debut as *Eunice Hubbel* in last November's staging of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. With over 30 years' experience, she says she's been fortunate to have played so many strong women - roles have

included *Annie Sullivan* in *The Miracle Worker*, *Blanche Dubois* in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Fay* in *Loot*, *Miss Moffatt* in *The Corn Is Green*, *Paulina* in *Death and the Maiden* and *Kate Keller* in *All My Sons*, to name a few. A hugely versatile actress who is passionate about live theatre, Jacque has also played roles in panto (*Captain Hook*, *Wicked Stepmother*), comedies (*Ginny* in *Outside Edge*, *Judith Bliss* in *Hay Fever*), and even had the nerve to bare it all as *Chris* in *Calendar Girls*.

Jacque is delighted to be playing *Verity Carr* alongside such a lovely cast, and excited to be wearing her Shakespearean costumes!



MANDY WHITE

Harriet Baxter

Unbelievably, Mandy has been a member of the Garrick for 40 years! Alongside having used her choreographic skills in a number of productions, in that time she's played all kinds of roles in all kinds of shows, from farces including (most recently) *Two Into One*, thrillers such as

A Murder Has Been Arranged, comedies including *Calendar Girls* and *Stepping Out*, several Pantos, and loads of musicals including *The Full Monty* and *La Cage Aux Folles*.

Mandy is absolutely delighted to be back on stage post-Covid.



ADELE HIGSON

Grace Friel

Adele has been a Garrick member for over 25 years, the first production being *Guys and Dolls*. Since that time she has appeared in numerous productions from musicals to plays. Along the way Adele has also Assistant-Stage-Managed and helped out backstage.

Favourite productions have been *Daisy Pulls It Off*, *Allo Allo*, *Acorn Antiques the Musical*, *Forbidden Planet* and the amazing *La Cage Aux Folles*.

Most recent productions were the amateur premiere of *Corrie!* and, just before the pandemic hit, *Fatal Attraction*. Adele is delighted to be finally back on the Garrick stage.



CIARA BOOKER

Rebecca Downey

Ciara trained in Musical Theatre at Bird College of Performing Arts. She played *Jasmine* in *Aladdin* last Christmas professionally and since then worked on a short film as Movement Director and 1st AD. This is Ciara's first production at the Garrick and she hopes you enjoy the play!



MIKE SHAW

DIRECTOR

Mike has been with the Garrick for 42 years, and fellow members say that the theatre runs through his veins. During this time, he has been involved on-stage as well as backstage for all of their productions.

Mike has directed *Towards Zero*, *A Murder Has Been Arranged*, Emlyn Williams' *Whodunnit* and Agatha Christie's *Go Back for Murder*. His acting roles have included *Privates on Parade*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *La Cage Aux Folles*, *Dick Whittington*, *When We Are Married!*, and he won a NODA Best Actor award for his portrayal of *Dr. Hubert Bonney* in *It Runs In The Family*. Mike's most recent appearance on the Garrick's stage was as one of the Alan Bennetts in *The Lady In The Van*.

When not treading the boards, Mike and his team have been the mainstay of the wardrobe department for over 37 years. They have picked up critical acclaim and recognition for their understated or awe inspiring creations, especially for the fantastic, ornately detailed costumes that won a NODA Award for costumes in the production of *Wolf Hall*.

He hopes you enjoy this performance of *House of Ghosts* as much as he has, working with a truly talented team of people both on-stage and the unsung heroes behind the scenes who, with their dedication and commitment, have made this production come to life.

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And, of course, we're always advertising auditions for upcoming productions... Perhaps you may want to be on stage too?!

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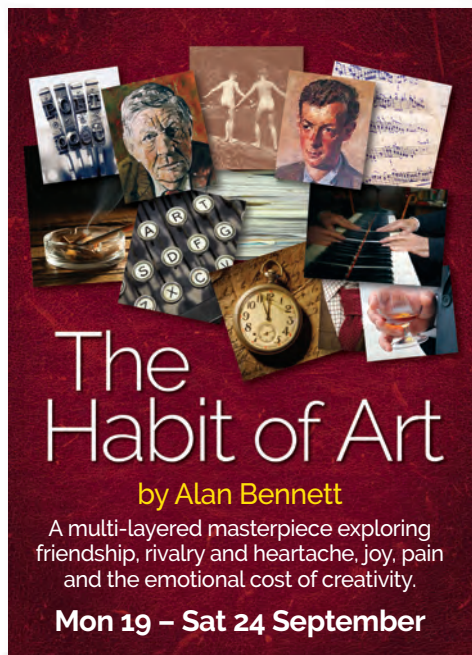
BACK STAGE:

Costume / Hair / Make Up • Props
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Stage Management • Lighting • Sound

To get in touch and find out more, please e-mail admin@altrinchamgarrick.co.uk



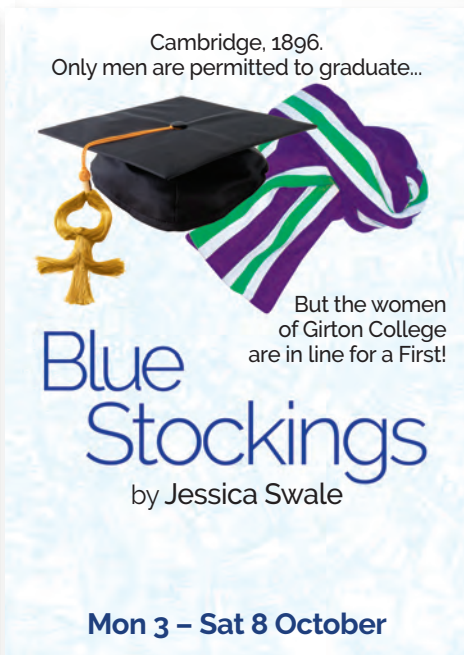
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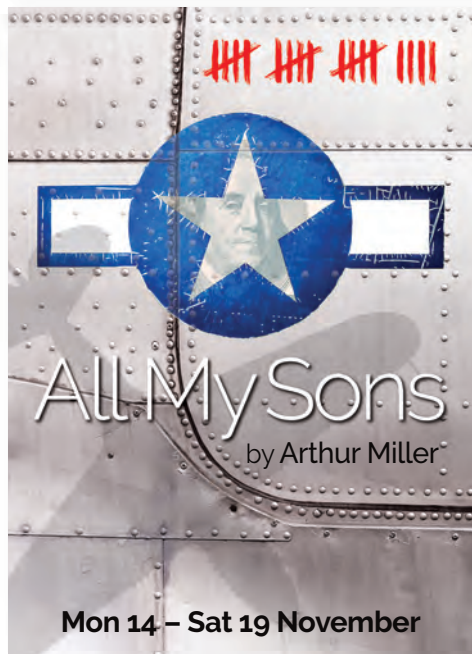


Let's start at the very beginning...

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Music by Richard Rodgers
Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II

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by Arthur Miller

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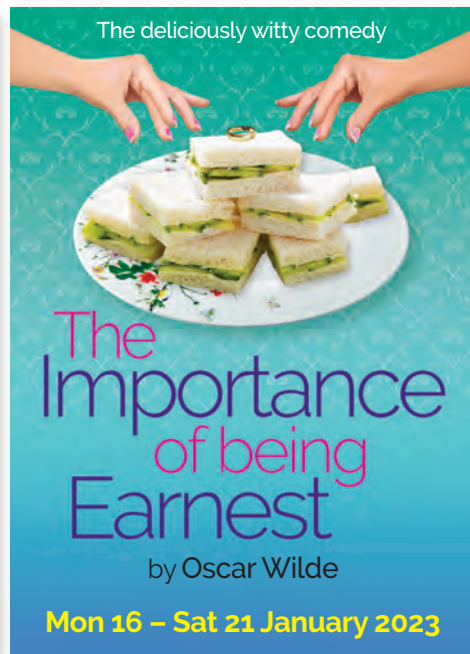


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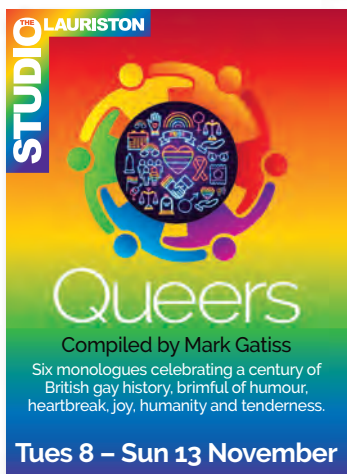
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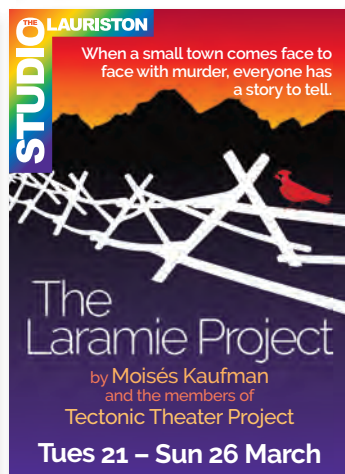


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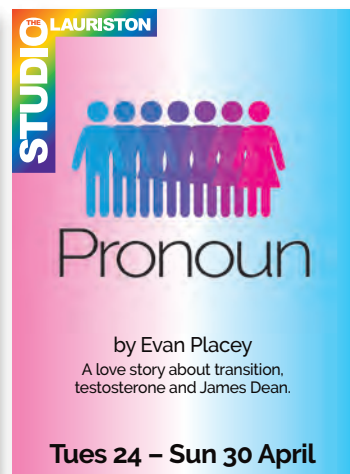


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When a small town comes face to face with murder, everyone has a story to tell.

The Laramie Project
by Moisés Kaufman
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Pronoun
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A love story about transition, testosterone and James Dean.

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YOUR ROUND!

Real ale, single malt whisky, classical music and classic cars... all things of which Inspector Morse is a connoisseur. Here's a brief guide to the first in the list...



Above: Real Ale Pumps at Oxford's Head of the River Inn - one of the locations where Inspector Morse was filmed with John Thaw enjoying a well-earned pint.

Real Ale as defined in the 1970s by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), is the most traditional of British beers: unpasteurized, unfiltered, and allowed to mature naturally (during a secondary fermentation) in casks – which is why it's also known as *Cask Ale* (in the States and elsewhere). Unlike most beers served from kegs and bottles, real ale contains live yeast and therefore has a short shelf life; the yeast is largely responsible for bringing out its distinctive flavours and aromas. (*Bottle-conditioned beer* is the exception to the cask rule, as that's real ale re-fermented in its bottle instead.) Other essential characteristics are temperature – real ale is served cool, but not cold, which masks flavour – and a gentle carbonation, resulting naturally from the cask fermentation; no extra carbon dioxide is ever used. (*To further complicate the is-this-a-real-ale question, there are also lots of British craft beers - often brewed locally - available now, some of which employ similar brewing techniques*).



Above: The Trout Inn, another of Morse's favourite watering holes.

Though there are many types of real ale (*Bitter, Mild, Golden Ale, Stout, IPA, Porter*, etc.), it can be an acquired taste for those who are used to drinking the icy-cold, gas-pressurised stuff, or even craft beers from the U.S. of A., which tend to be quite aggressively flavoured. Remember, Real Ale is how beer's been made and consumed for centuries, probably for as long as beer has even existed. Give it a chance, and – if you don't already – you might even grow to appreciate it. Like Endeavour... **Cheers!**

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REVIEWS FROM THE
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