

Production
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The Lady in the Van



Monday 4 –
Saturday 9
October 2021



Altrincham Garrick
PLAYHOUSE



Coming soon:

Great Drama at the Garrick

Tues 9 – Sun 14 November

Mon 15 – Sat 20 November

Mon 17 – Sat 22 January 2022

STUDIO THE GARRICK LAURISTON

Neil LaBute's
The Shape of Things

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How far would you go for love? For art? What would you be willing to change? Which price might you pay? Such are the painful questions explored by Neil LaBute.

A young student drifts into an ever-changing relationship with an art major while his best friends' engagement crumbles: so unleashing a drama that peels back the skin of two modern-day relationships, exposing the raw meat and gristle that lie beneath.

Warning - this play contains strong adult language and explicit sexual references

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

Tennessee Williams' raw and emotional American drama

After losing her Mississippi home to creditors, Blanche DuBois relocates to the New Orleans home of her younger sister and brother-in-law, Stella and Stanley Kowalski. Undermined by romantic illusions, Blanche is unable to cope with life's harsh realities. Though she finds a glimmer of hope while connecting with Stanley's gentlemanly friend, Mitch, Blanche cannot face the truth of her own troubled past and ultimately descends into madness.

Tennessee Williams' explosive and groundbreaking drama ranks as one of the greatest plays of the twentieth century.

FRANKENSTEIN

Nick Dear's graphic, violent adaptation of Mary Shelley's classic tale

Childlike in his innocence but grotesque in form, Frankenstein's bewildered creature is cast out into a hostile universe by his horror-struck maker. Meeting with cruelty wherever he goes, the increasingly desperate and vengeful Creature is determined to track down his creator and strike a terrifying deal...

Scientific responsibility, parental neglect, cognitive development and the nature of good and evil, are embedded within this thrilling, gory, deeply disturbing classic tale.

Premiered at the National Theatre in February 2011 with Benedict Cumberbatch and Jonny Lee Miller alternating in the lead roles, Barry Purves' production of this play - **WARNING - contains scenes of a graphic sexual and violent nature.**



Welcome

...to Altrincham Garrick Playhouse, and tonight's production of *The Lady In The Van*.

Alan Bennett holds a special place in the hearts of many theatre lovers across the nation, not only for the sheer breadth and quality of his writing, but for the fact that, as he's got older, he's become even more prolific. In an almost unprecedented creative CV, his best and best-liked plays (and books) have all appeared since his mid-50s: the magnificent *Talking Heads* monologues, *The Madness of George III* and *The History Boys* on stage, and the autobiographical collections *Writing Home* and *Untold Stories*. Because of his additional presence as a performer – from the Oxbridge revue *Beyond the Fringe* to roles in his own TV and stage plays – Bennett's face, his familiar outfits of tweed jacket with sweater and tie, and plaintive Yorkshire tonal voice are more familiar to the public than those of any British dramatist since Noel Coward. And, at some point, most people involved in theatre will have either appeared in, or been involved in, a staging of a play by Alan Bennett – including me! My own 'debut' onstage at the Garrick was as one of *The History Boys* in our unforgettable 2009 production (see the photo below) of what has recently been voted 'the nation's favourite play'. It's great to see that several other people who were either onstage or backstage for that production are still involved at the Garrick, and actively playing their parts in helping to keep this cultural jewel continuing to shine.

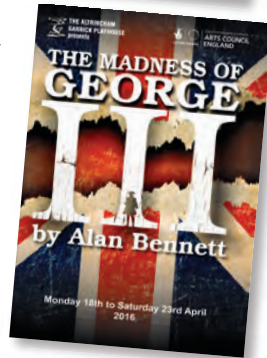
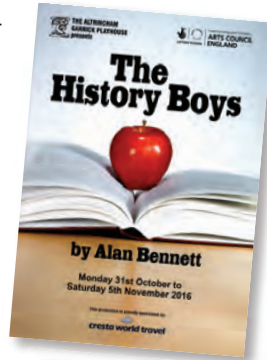
The importance of continuity in theatre cannot be understated, and that includes our ongoing relationships with the local Business Community. We are delighted that **Myersons Solicitors** have chosen to continue offering their invaluable support to the Garrick, in honouring their sponsorship of this production, which was originally planned to take place last year. We have had an association with Myersons for several years now, and we sincerely hope that they and their guests thoroughly enjoy this production.

With the re-emergence of performing arts venues following the long dark months of the pandemic, like many other theatres we are trying to offer 'something for everyone'. There is so much going on here at the moment, from *our own theatrical productions* to the *Altrincham Garrick Picturehouse*, the recently-launched *Garrick Show Choir* (which recently had a phenomenal first gathering) to the forthcoming *Garrick Academy Dramathon Week*, as well as *Concerts* and *Comedians*, we urge you to 'get involved' and join us, as either a fully-fledged member or as a 'Friend'. You won't regret it!

Enjoy the show!

Joseph Meighan

Artistic Director, Altrincham Garrick Playhouse



Altrincham Garrick
PLAYHOUSE

Altrincham Garrick Playhouse.
Barrington Road, Altrincham,
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The Lady and the Van

Alan Bennett discovered much more about himself than he could have imagined when a homeless woman set up camp in his driveway.

When the real life Miss Mary Shepherd died in 1989, the acclaimed author set about writing a lengthy article for the London Review of Books to document the 15 years in which she had commandeered his driveway. It's unlikely Bennett knew it at the time, but his diary entries over that decade and a half would end up forming the basis of a novel, a hit radio and stage play, and 16 years later, a feature film.

He may now be in his mid-eighties, but he seems to be more popular than ever and there are few other contemporary playwrights who can match his appeal at the box office. The last surviving member of the four Bright Young Men of the Beyond The Fringe team that took both Edinburgh and the West End by storm in the early 1960s, Bennett's status as a National Treasure has by now undoubtedly been confirmed. Yet the normally mild-mannered Bennett bristles at such a description, insisting that he's nothing like the cosy, biscuit-dunking, loveable eccentric he's sometimes painted. It may be that his sympathetic creation of several ladies of advanced years, often vividly portrayed by theatrical greats including Thora Hird, Patricia Routledge and Maggie Smith has coloured the outside world's view of him. In *The Lady in the Van* Bennett ingeniously combines these two strands of his work by showcasing an extraordinary woman in old age and by giving us two versions of himself.

In this instance, while he splits his female focus between his frail, elderly mother and her descent into Alzheimer's disease, and his belligerent, troglodyte tenant, Miss Shepherd, we also get to witness (on the one hand) the outwardly humane and public-spirited Alan Bennett, and (on the other) the private man, who will cold-bloodedly loot creative material from other people's lives.

In the play, the private Alan Bennett observes to himself that "*old ladies are my bread and butter*" and so Miss Shepherd was clearly destined for some kind of posthumous literary glory as soon as she moved her Bedford into Bennett's driveway. Yet a decade stretched between her death in April 1989 and her resurrection on the West

End stage in November 1999. Why the delay?

"During those ten years I'd make occasional notes about turning my experience of Miss Shepherd into a play, but I couldn't see how to do it," reveals Bennett. *"I was sure that I could tell her story - there was no problem about that. But I couldn't see a way of telling my story until it occurred to me that I could split myself into two - that seemed to be the key. I'd already found out that her circumstances were quite dramatic.*

And it had always struck me that her characteristically peculiar way of talking would give her dialogue some edge and texture."

In the foreword of his script Bennett notes, *'the device of having two actors playing me isn't just a bit of theatrical showing off and does, however crudely, correspond to the reality. There was one bit of me (often irritated and resentful) that had to deal with this unwelcome guest camped literally on my doorstep, but there was another bit of me that was amused by how cross this eccentric lodger made me and that took pleasure in Miss Shepherd's absurdities and her outrageous demands.'*

Given his self-effacing and fastidious nature, it is all the more surprising that Bennett should have invited the irascible and noisome presence of the down-and-out Miss Shepherd into his forecourt in the first place. His tolerance of her eccentric and demanding ways would occasionally wear thin but he still allowed her to settle in her dilapidated Bedford, and later an equally ramshackle Robin Reliant, for no fewer than fifteen years. But, as it turns out, it was anything but the act of a Good Samaritan.

"My motives were entirely selfish," Bennett insists. *"All I wanted was to have a quiet life and not be distracted as I sat at my desk, looking out at the street. To an extent, I suppose that I did protect her from her persecutors. I'm just glad nobody could hear me when I told them off - I must have sounded very priggish. I'm not good - being*

good is a constructive act. Perhaps I was just being superstitious: perhaps I thought that by inviting Miss Shepherd to park her van on my property, it would bring me luck."

During their lengthy acquaintance, Miss Shepherd dropped the occasional snippet about the life she had led before her descent



Top: Alan Bennett, pictured in 1975, and (above) Margaret Fairchild, the real Miss Shepherd, pictured in 1985. Photos by Allan Warren / Tom Miller. Reproduced courtesy of MTC

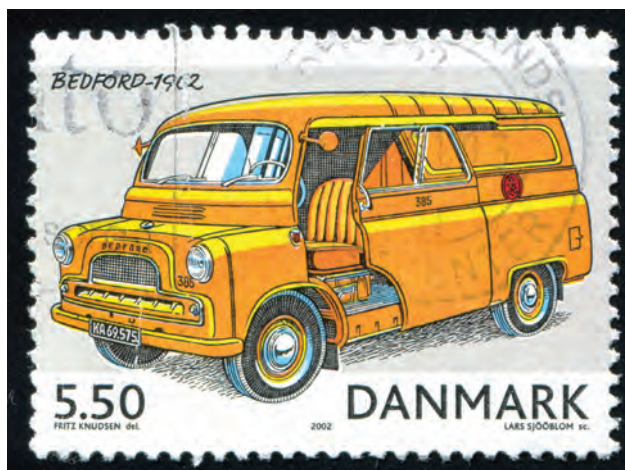
into vagrancy. Her Catholic fervour, argues Bennett, was perfectly genuine, "even if the Pope and the College of Cardinals were not above being sent one of Miss Shepherd's letters". She was quite open about her spells as a somewhat unlikely novitiate nun and talked about her wartime experience as an ambulance-driver. But it was by hearsay that Bennett learnt about her nascent talent as a concert-pianist, and in the play he wonders if her mental breakdown were not caused by the clash between her musical ambitions and her religious aspirations.

"She thought of herself as a very moral person, without a shred of self-pity. In fact, she didn't believe that she had anything in common with other bag ladies whom she'd describe as 'the desperate poor'. She had a lot of middle-class attitudes and would not have considered herself a victim of Thatcherism. Indeed, she thought that Mrs Thatcher was admirable, and politically she held extremely right-wing views that verged on support for the National Front."

In the past, Bennett has expressed mild resentment that some critics, confused by the smokescreen of his ironic wit, have sometimes overlooked the serious points which he makes in his work. *"People say that all I do is string a few jokes together. But drama is often able to make us empathise with characters and situations that in real life we'd condemn or avoid. Audiences might root for Miss Shepherd in The Lady in the Van, whereas they'd be repelled by her were they to actually meet her in the street."*

It is a mark of Bennett's skill that he is able to engage the sympathies of an audience in the fate of such an anti-heroine. However, one could also point out that had Miss Shepherd not possessed any of the qualities that make her such an outstanding character, he would never have made her the centre of his play. Through the lens of Miss Shepherd, *The Lady in the Van* has also come to be seen as an increasingly self-reflective and autobiographical play for Bennett. By looking at the moral implications and ethical complexities of telling someone else's story, the writer ultimately peers into his own story, and considers how one day it might be told.

At the heart of Bennett and Shepherd's real-life relationship, though, we find a message of tolerance and humanity; a melancholic reflection on Britain's class system as it examines the cruel grip of poverty, and the vicious spell mental illness can cast on society's most forgotten inhabitants.



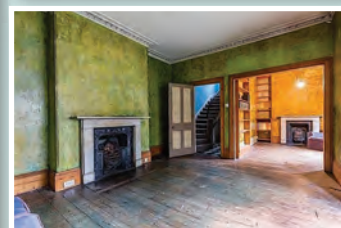
The 1962 Bedford Van - clearly popular in Denmark in 2002! Image by Shutterstock

23 Gloucester Crescent



Even though he moved from Camden Town to Primrose Hill in 2005, Alan Bennett only sold his former home fourteen years later. In the intervening period, while it remained empty and became increasingly dilapidated, the property became a 'magnet for drunks and drug addicts'. Paint could be seen peeling off the outside walls, with pallets stacked in the garden and the interior rooms looking bare and neglected.

Bennett bought the house, situated on the corner of Gloucester Crescent and Inverness Street, for just £13,500 in 1969. It was the property that hosted 'The Lady In The Van' (in her various vehicles), as well as being used as the location where the film was subsequently shot.



The property was put up for sale with a guide price of £3m in 2017. It was subsequently bought for £2.05m in December 2019, with its new owners planning to restore it as a family home.

Gloucester Crescent has been a favourite address for many people in the arts and publishing fields for decades, including the two sons of the late British theatre and opera director Sir Jonathan Miller - alongside Peter Cook, Dudley Moore and Alan Bennett, creators of 'Beyond The Fringe' - who lived in the house directly opposite no.23.

Images reproduced courtesy of Rightmove / HM Land Registry

Our next Main-House production is
the Northern Premiere of this Disney classic!

Disney **THE LITTLE
MERMAID**



In a magical kingdom beneath the sea, the beautiful young mermaid Ariel longs to leave her ocean home to live in the world above. Ariel is fascinated with life on land. On one of her visits to the surface, which are forbidden by her controlling father, King Triton, she falls for a human Prince. Determined to be with her new love, Ariel makes a dangerous deal with the sea witch Ursula to become human for three days. But when plans go awry for the starcrossed lovers, a showdown begins between good and evil that only love can remedy.

Based on one of Hans Christian Andersen's most beloved stories and the classic animated 1989 film, Disney's *The Little Mermaid* is a hauntingly beautiful love story for the ages.

With music by eight-time Academy Award winner Alan Menken, lyrics by Howard Ashman and Glenn Slater, and a compelling book by Doug Wright, this fishy fable will capture your heart with its irresistible songs including "**Under the Sea**," "**Kiss the Girl**," and "**Part of Your World**."



**Monday 25 –
Sunday 31
October**

**Matinées on Saturday
and Sunday**



Based on the
Hans Christian Andersen story
and the Disney film produced by
Howard Ashman & John Musker
and written & directed by
John Musker and Ron Clements
Originally Produced by Disney Theatrical Productions

Director's Notes

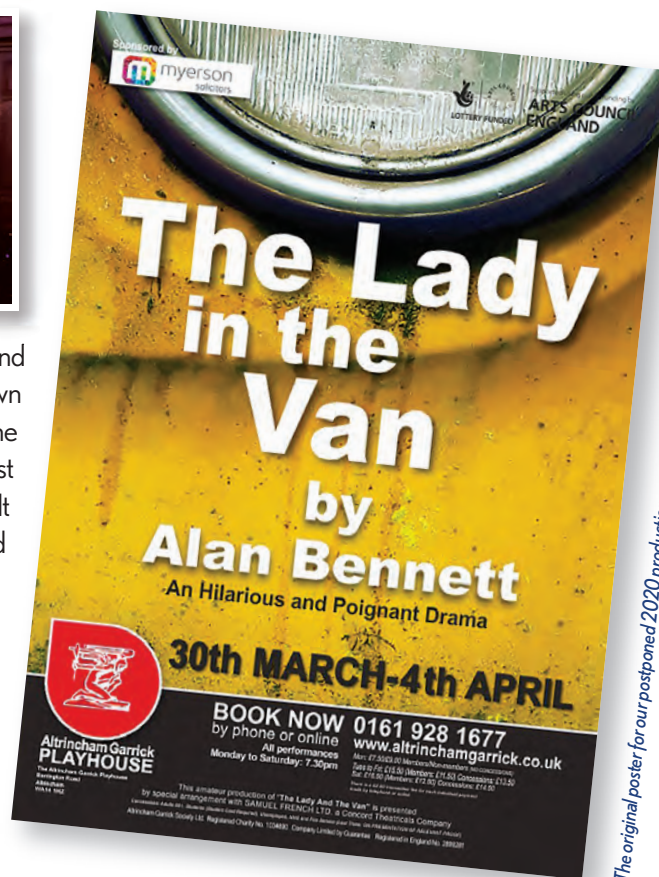


On the 16th March 2020 theatres in the UK were closed so that present and future productions all over the country were put "on hold" for an unknown amount of time. It was only two weeks before the production of *The Lady in the Van* and it was such a very sad time to walk away from the theatre, play, cast and crew with no idea what we were all about to face. However, despite difficult and dark times, we have now emerged as a fully operational theatre again and can welcome everyone to the opening of our new season.

We feel very fortunate to have been able to re-rehearse *The Lady in the Van* - written by the great Alan Bennett - and are now excited to give you the opportunity to see it at long last. Enjoy!

Carole Carr

Director, *The Lady In The Van*



The original poster for our postponed 2020 production.

This production has been sponsored by

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Alan Bennett

Alan Bennett has had a long and successful career. This timeline highlights some of the key milestones in his life.

1934: Alan Bennett is born on 9 May in the Armley district of Leeds. A son for Walter, a violin-playing Co-op butcher, and his wife, Lilian Mary (née Peel).

1938: Alan attends Christ Church, Upper Armley, Church of England School, where he is in the same class as another pupil who will go on to make their fame and fortune as a writer – Barbara Taylor Bradford.

1945: Bennett is sent to Leeds Modern School, where he excels and eventually wins a scholarship to read medieval history at Exeter College, Oxford.

1952: He is required to do National Service, during which he studies Russian at the Joint Services School for Linguists.

1954: Bennett goes up to Exeter College, Oxford, having successfully applied for a Scholarship..

1957: He graduates with a first class degree in history, after which he starts an academic career as a junior lecturer in history at Magdalen College, Oxford. However, Bennett's involvement with fledgling comedy troupe The Oxford Revue will soon take his career in a different path.

1960: Alongside Dudley Moore, Peter Cook and Jonathan Miller, Bennett appears in the satirical show *Beyond The Fringe* in Edinburgh in August. The show is a huge hit, and transfers to London the following year, where it wins an Evening Standard Award.

1962: *Beyond The Fringe* opens in New York, where it wins a Tony Award. Bennett finally gives up a career in academia, and starts writing for radio, TV and the stage.

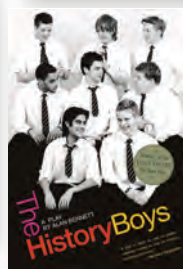
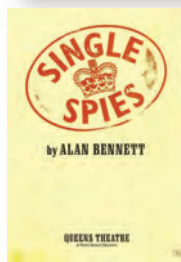
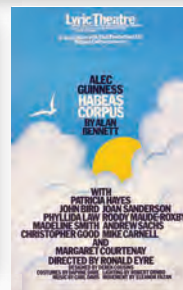
1968: Bennett's first West End play, *Forty Years On*, is staged in London. Directed by Patrick Garland and starring John Gielgud, it is part revue, part play, and is set in a boys' public school called Albion House. Evening Standard Award for Best Play.

1972: *A Day Out*, Bennett's first play for television, is broadcast. It will be followed by *A Little Outing* (1977), *Intensive Care* (1982), *An Englishman Abroad* (1983) and *A Question of Attribution* (1991), amongst others.

1980: Bennett's play *Enjoy*, directed by Ronald Eyre and with a stellar cast including Joan Plowright, Colin Blakeley and Liz Smith, lasts just 7 weeks in the West End. The 2008 revival with David Troughton and Alison Steadman did rather better, with over £1m in advanced ticket sales for the West End following an acclaimed National Tour.

1982: *A Woman of No Importance*, starring Patricia Routledge, is screened by the BBC. It is a forerunner to the phenomenally successful series *Talking Heads* that will make Bennett a household name.

1984: Maggie Smith and Michael Palin feature alongside a scene-stealing Pig in *A Private Function*, a quintessentially English tale about an attempt to defy post-war rationing in late-1940s Yorkshire.



1987: The first series of *Talking Heads* is broadcast. Starring Julie Walters, Maggie Smith, Stephanie Cole, Thora Hird, Patricia Routledge and Bennett himself, the series of six monologues are a huge hit and win numerous awards.

1988: Bennett writes the screenplay for *Prick Up Your Ears*, a biopic about the tragic romance between British playwrights Joe Orton and Kenneth Halliwell, which was conducted at a time when homosexuality was still illegal in the U.K. Alfred Molina and Gary Oldman give terrific performances as the two writers, supported by an equally impressive Vanessa Redgrave as Orton's formidable agent Peggy Ramsay.

1994: The film *The Madness of King George*, based on his 1991 play *The Madness of George III*, is released. Starring Nigel Hawthorne and Helen Mirren, it earns Bennett an Oscar nomination for his screenplay.

1997: Although he will not reveal it until many years later, Bennett is diagnosed with colon cancer and he is given a less-than 50 per cent chance of surviving. He is treated and makes a full recovery.

1999: *The Lady in the Van* opens in the West End, starring Maggie Smith as the eccentric Mary Shepherd who parked her van and lived in Bennett's driveway for 15 years.

2004: *The History Boys* has its premiere at the Royal National Theatre in London, and goes on to win many awards, including the 2005 Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Play and the 2006 Tony Award for Best Play. It is made into a film directed by Nicholas Hytner in 2006.

2005: Bennett publishes his highly revelatory memoirs, *Untold Stories*, in which he talks about his mother's senility and depression, his battle with cancer, and his bisexuality. The book wins the prestigious JR Ackerley Prize for Autobiography.

2009: Bennett's play *The Habit of Art*, about the relationship between the poet W. H. Auden and the composer Benjamin Britten, premieres at the National Theatre to warm reviews.

2012: *People* opens at the National Theatre. In December, *Cocktail Sticks*, an autobiographical play by Bennett, premieres at the National Theatre as part of a double bill with the monologue *Hymn*.

2015: The film *The Lady in the Van* is released.

2018: *Allelujah!*, a comic drama about an NHS hospital threatened with closure, opens at London's Bridge Theatre to critical acclaim.

2020: During the Covid-19 pandemic, a new series of *Talking Heads* is produced by the BBC, with new versions of the much-loved monologues being performed by (amongst others) Imelda Staunton, Harriet Walter, Sarah Lancashire, Martin Freeman, Kristin Scott-Thomas & Jodie Comer.

Cast & Production Team

Miss Shepherd
Celia Bonner

Alan Bennett 1
Mike Shaw

Alan Bennett 2
Jonathan Black

Mam / Hospital Doctor
Sandy McGuire

Rufus
Matthew Foster

Pauline
Lindsey Barker

Social Worker / Interviewer
Rebekah Davies

Lout / Doctor
Charles Black

Underwood
Nick Sample

Leo Fairchild / Ambulance Man
John Jones

Director **Carole Carr**

Stage Manager **Clare Gresty**

Set Design **Barry Purves**
..... **Amanda Cooke**

Set Crew **Paul Simpson**
..... **Phil Gleave**
..... **Charles Black**

Prompt **Anne O'Reilly**

ASM **Helen Sallabank**
..... **Sue Berry**

Lighting and Projection **Geoff Scullard**

Sound **Christine Mills**

Wardrobe **Mike Shaw**

Assisted by **Stella Blackburn**

..... **Julie Shaw, Betty Farmer**

..... **Lynne Saleh**

..... **Dallas Bradshaw**

..... **Helen Phillips**

Properties **David Ades**

Production Carpenter **Steve Cox**

Scenic Artist **Mandy Cooke**

Technical Adviser **Paul Simpson**

Vehicle Mechanic **Steven McKie**

Set Construction **Phil Gleave, Trevor McKie**

..... **Nicholas McKie, Mark McEwan**

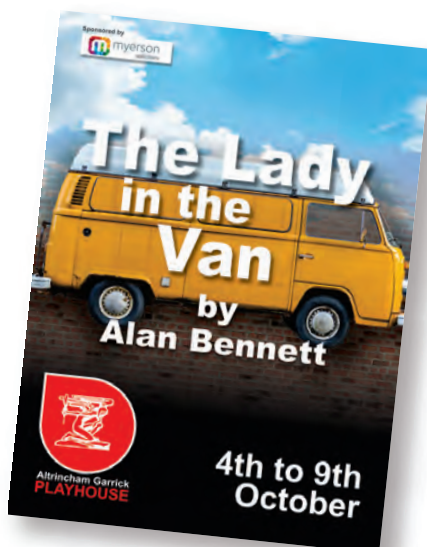
..... **Steve Cox, Dave Bailey**

..... **Bob Green, Drew Lightfoot**

..... **Andy McHugh, John Murphy**

..... **Peter Nelson, Steve Rigg**

..... **Paul Simpson**



Altrincham Garrick Playhouse would like to extend our sincere thanks to all of our **volunteers** and **staff** who continuously strive for excellence, and have worked hard to bring you our new Season of entertainment.

The Company



Lindsey Barker

Pauline

Lindsey is thrilled to be back on stage performing again after the enforced theatre closure due to coronavirus. The last play she performed was **When We Are Married**, back in November 2019, playing the role of saucy *Lottie Grady*, and she cannot wait to perform again with this amazing cast.

This will be Lindsey's 60th production over 23 years, including musicals, pantomime, one-act plays and full length plays, but only her second Alan Bennett play - the first was **People** in February 2019. This is Lindsey's fourth season at the Garrick and she hopes to continue here for many more years to come.

Live theatre has returned! Relax, sit back and enjoy!



Charles Black

Lout / Doctor

Charles has been a supporter of The Garrick Theatre for some years now and is delighted to be making his acting debut in this production of *The Lady In The Van*.

'I have very much enjoyed being part of this fantastic production and the cast has been really supportive as this is the first time I have ever been on stage. I have been coming to The Garrick for quite some time now, mainly to see my dad up on stage, so it is really special for me that he is in this production as well.'

Apart from the theatre Charles enjoys playing football for Hale and Altrincham United and taking his dog Archie for long walks. Let hope we see more of Charles in the future.



Jonathan Black

Alan Bennett 2

Jonathan is delighted to be back on the main stage again and this production of *The Lady In The Van* is, in particular, very special for him as it is the first time ever he has been on stage with his son Charles who makes his acting debut.

In past seasons Jonathan's appearances have included **Privates On Parade**, **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 last seasons **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**.

Jonathan lives in Hale with his wife and children, who are regular supporters at The Garrick Theatre, and has very much enjoyed working for the first time with Carole Carr as Director.



Celia Bonner

Miss Shepherd

Celia joined the Garrick many years ago when she moved to Manchester from her native London and has been involved ever since, both on and off stage. Work commitments at the BBC and elsewhere meant she could not always do as much here as she would have liked but she has acted and directed both on the main stage and in the Lauriston Studio as well as for the Green Room Theatre Wilmslow.

She loves the writing of Alan Bennett and having directed **The Wind in the Willows** and the acclaimed production of **The Madness of George III**, and acting in **The History Boys** and **People**, she is delighted to have the chance to play another (and in this case a particularly eccentric one) of his characterful women.



Rebekah Davies

Social Worker / Interviewer

Rebekah is absolutely thrilled to be back here at the Garrick with her second show on this stage. Her first role with the company was the 'slightly' more physical role of *Bombalurina* for the well received **Cats**, and she hopes that **The Lady in the Van** will be the end of the 2 year hiatus of performing that hit us all.

Since making the move back to Manchester with the BBC, Rebekah has re-found her passion for musical theatre whilst performing in **The Skriker** for MIF in 2015. She has then gone on to play *Sally Slaton* in the MAODS production of **Parade**, performed in **Spamalot** and played the *Stepmother* for All Saints as well as having played *The Wicked Baroness* in **Cinderella** and *June* in **Chicago**, both for South Manchester AOS.

This will be Rebekah's first Bennett play, and she hopes you enjoy!



Matthew Foster

Rufus

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**. 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.



John Jones

Leo Fairchild / Ambulance Man

John trained with David Johnson drama in Manchester. Recent Theatre appearances include *Bardy* in **Entertaining Angels** and **Strangers on a Train** at Brookdale, **Breath of Spring** at Altrincham Little Theatre, *Arthur Watt* in **Start Square** at both Port Sunlight's Gladstone Theatre and Liverpool's Hope Street Theatre, **Back To Ours** at Empty Space Theatre, Salford, and in **As The Sun Sets** at Valley

Theatre, Liverpool.

John played *Mr McKenzie* in Russell T Davies' acclaimed Channel 4 Aids drama **It's a Sin**, and has also appeared in **Coronation Street**.

and, behind the scenes...



Sandy McGuire *Mam / Hospital Doctor*

Sandy has appeared in many productions at The Garrick, both on the Main Stage and in The Lauriston Studio, including *The Manchester Man*, *Fur Coat and No Knickers*, *Beyond Reasonable Doubt*, *The Wind In The Willows*, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Witness For The Prosecution*, *Comfort and Joy*, *The Winslow Boy*, *Anne Of The Thousand Days*, *Be My Baby*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Truth*

About Blokes, which was then taken to The Manchester Fringe.

Film and TV appearances have included *At Home with The Braithwaites*, *Tonight with Trevor McDonald* and many more, including the film about the Moors Murders, *See No Evil*, which is out on DVD. Also if you don't blink you will see her in the movies *Garfield 2* and *Alfie*.

She recently retired from role playing with Manchester University Faculty of Medicine and Greater Manchester Police Force.



Nick Sample *Underwood*

An experienced performer who has both appeared in and directed musicals, dramas, comedies and farces for a number of companies across the North West, Nick made his first notable appearance at the Garrick as *Hector* in our 2009 staging of Alan Bennett's *The History Boys*. Since then, memorable roles have included *Inspector Goole* in *An Inspector Calls*, *Cardinal Wolsey* in *Anne Of A Thousand Days*, *Bob* in *Pack of Lies*, *Major Courtney* in *The*

Ladykillers, a NODA Best Actor Award-winning portrayal of *King George III* in Celia Bonner's acclaimed production of Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III*, *Alfieri* in *A View From The Bridge* and, just before Covid-19 struck, *Lt Gus Braden* in *Fatal Attraction*.

For the Garrick Playhouse, Nick directed *Bette And Joan* in the Lauriston Studio before graduating to the main stage with productions of *The History Boys* in 2016, and 2017's memorable staging of Mike Poulton and Hilary Mantel's *Wolf Hall*.



Mike Shaw *Alan Bennett 1*

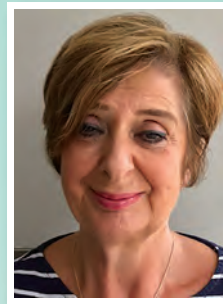
Mike has been with the Garrick for 42 years. and fellow members say that the theatre runs through his veins. During this time, he has been involved on-stage as well as backstage for all of their productions.

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*, 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 in *When We Are Married!*.

When not treading the boards, Mike and his team have been the mainstay of the wardrobe department for over 36 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*.

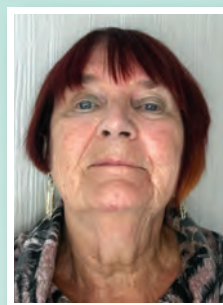
He hopes you enjoy this performance of *The Lady In The Van* as much as he has, working with a truly talented team of people both on-stage and the unsung heroes behind the scenes who, with their dedication and commitment, have made this production come to life. Mike would like you to sit back and enjoy your performance of this play and thank you for your continued support in making this and all other Garrick Productions the successes they are.



Sue Berry *ASM*

Sue has been an ASM at the Garrick for the last 6 years and in this time has been involved in 15 Main Stage & Studio productions. These include *Oliver*, *The Thrill of Love*, *Bette & Joan*, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *The History Boys*, *Bombshells*, *The Secret Garden*, *Brassed Off* and *People*, to name but a few.

Sue enjoys being part of a production team where she is able to use her organisational skills to the full. This means ensuring that the stage or rehearsal space is ready for the smooth execution of each performance, organising and plotting props, and dressing the set. Sue is particularly looking forward to this run of *The Lady in the Van* following its cancellation in March 2020.



Anne O'Reilly *Prompt*

After several years as an ASM, managing quick changes, hiding in a triffid (*Little Shop of Horrors*), providing cakes and Bath Buns (*Brief Encounter*), producing wine, beer, whisky, tea and champagne (*Fur Coat No Knickers*), blood and bodies not to mention a real cat (*The Lieutenant of Inishmore*) and draping actors in mouldy vegetables (*Carry On Cleo*), Anne has decided to opt for a more sedate job. Prompting such talented actors in *The Lady In The Van* has been

so enjoyable from the original read through to the final polished performance that Anne is looking forward to the next opportunity to support the Garrick actors.



Helen Sallabank *ASM*

As a relative newcomer to the Garrick, Helen was delighted to be asked to be ASM for *The Lady In The Van*. Building upon her passion for theatre, this is only the third play she has been involved with at the Garrick, having previously worked behind the scenes on *Business Affairs* and *My Mother Said I Never Should*.

"Ensuring the show runs smoothly behind the scenes and helping the actors and director is a great way to take part without wanting to be on the stage! Learning the ropes and working with this dedicated cast and crew has been a great experience which I have thoroughly enjoyed, and bringing this wonderful Alan Bennett play to life with its humour and sadness has been a true delight"

The thrill of seeing a production grow from first rehearsal to the performance you will see tonight is very rewarding.

A STAR IS BORN

You might not have a burning desire to appear on one of our stages.

You may not be passionate about helping out in a crucial role backstage.

But there is still a way that you can share your love of theatre, and benefit at the same time!

Turn over the page to find out more...

AND IT COULD BE YOU!

A STARRING ROLE
FOR YOU!



You have become more important to us than ever!
After 12 months of being unable to open for 'LIVE' productions, we really value your continued support, both financially and as our future Audience. We are therefore asking you to support us by becoming one of the

FRIENDS OF THE GARRICK



Gold Friends

- ◆ £30 Annual Fee
- ◆ Can purchase unlimited discounted priced tickets



Silver Friends

- ◆ £20 Annual Fee
- ◆ Can purchase 2 discounted priced tickets per production



25U

- ◆ For 16 to 25 year olds, a FREE membership scheme with one discounted ticket available for multiple performances of Garrick productions only.

- Gold and Silver discounts apply to all Garrick productions, and also to some visiting shows.
- Please note existing members will automatically be enrolled in the new scheme, and no new payment will be requested until the existing membership renewal date.
- Single members will be transferred to the Gold scheme.
- Senior members will be transferred to the Silver scheme.
- Junior Members will be transferred to our new 25U scheme
- Honorary members will receive Gold scheme benefits.
- Simply enrol online, or speak to our Box Office to become a member of our Friends of the Garrick audience loyalty scheme.

PLAY YOUR PART!



The Garrick ACADEMY of Performing Arts

The Garrick Academy of Performing Arts (GAPA) is a theatre company looking to welcome any young person, aged from 5 to 18, who is interested in any aspect of the theatre, or performing arts (on or off stage), and who wants to take part in a FUN activity.

Our main aims are that all of our students are fully engaged with our active classes and, most of all, enjoy themselves.

Every Saturday we run a range of sessions for students aged from 5 to 18 and, through a series of 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. There are lots of opportunities for students to perform on stage at the Garrick Playhouse too. They will also allow each student to learn, develop, gain confidence, and select the disciplines they wish to focus on.

Our emphasis is primarily on enjoying ourselves, but we are also prepared to put in the hard work it takes to achieve great performances. It's also great to see our students gain confidence through the classes we run, and from the skills they learn, and then watch them take them into their future lives.

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!

It's Great! It's Active!
It's Positive! It's Amazing!

GAPA DRAMATHON WEEK

How do you stage a play in a week?
Join The Dramathon Week and we'll show you!

At the start of the course a play script will be presented to the attendees and, by the end of day one, the parts will be allocated and the challenge really begins. If you want a fun week of drama and stage skills/technique, sign up now by booking your place with our Box Office, or email us at

academy@altrinchamgarrick.co.uk

25th-29th OCTOBER 2021

This week is ideally aimed at KS2 through to KS5. KS1 attendees will work on a poetry presentation.

A Glossary

In typical Alan Bennett style, *The Lady In The Van* includes references to a number of items, people and places that may leave several of you wondering what he's going on about. So, we thought we'd give you some helpful info...

Yardley Original English Lavender Perfumed Talc

"Capturing the soothing properties of finest lavender, Yardley London's Original English Lavender Perfumed Talc combines lavender's floral freshness with a deeper note of musk. This luxurious perfumed talcum powder, infused with Yardley London's Original English Lavender fragrance, gives a silky smooth texture to the skin, leaving it delicately fragranced and refreshed. Best applied after bathing or showering."



George Balanchine and Isadora Duncan Frederick Ashton adored her, George Balanchine vilified her - no dancer has ever divided opinion quite like Isadora Duncan.

'Isadora Duncan is the greatest woman I have ever known,' Auguste Rodin declared. 'Sometimes I think she is the greatest woman the world has ever known.' Artists, writers and otherwise perfectly sane people have shared his enthusiasm. Yet anyone who has seen a grossly self-indulgent performer persist beyond her (or his) prime would be more inclined to trust George Balanchine's youthful memory of Duncan as a 'drunk fat woman who for hours was rolling around like a pig.'

Walter Richard Sickert (31 May 1860 - 22 January 1942) was a German-born English painter and print-maker who was a member of the Camden Town Group of Post-Impressionist artists in early 20th-century London. He was an important influence on distinctively British styles of avant-garde art in the mid- and late 20th century.



Sickert was a cosmopolitan and eccentric who often favoured ordinary people and urban scenes as his subjects. His work includes portraits of well-known personalities and images derived from press photographs. He is considered a prominent figure in the transition from Impressionism to Modernism. Decades after his death, several researchers and theorists had suspected Sickert was the London-based serial killer Jack the Ripper, though it has largely been dismissed.

Williams & Glyn's Bank Limited was established in London in 1970, when the Royal Bank of Scotland merged its two subsidiaries in England and Wales, Williams Deacon's Bank Ltd. and Glyn, Mills & Co. In 1985, Williams & Glyn's was fully absorbed into the Royal Bank of Scotland. The Royal Bank of Scotland Group was renamed NatWest Group in 2020.

Bedales School is a co-educational, boarding and day independent school in the village of Steep, near the market town of Petersfield in Hampshire. Founded in 1893, since 1900 the school has been on an 120-acre estate in Steep. As well as playing fields, orchards, woodland, pasture and a nature reserve, the campus also has two Grade I listed arts and crafts buildings - the Lupton Hall (1911) and the Memorial Library (1921). Viscount Linley and Lady Sarah Armstrong-Jones, the children of Lord Snowden and Princess Margaret, were pupils at Bedales in the 1970s.

Petticoat Line was an all-woman panel show on the BBC Home Service chaired by Anona Winn which discussed listeners' letters and problems. It started on 6 January 1965 and ran for 11 years. It was devised by Anona Winn and Ian C. Messiter. The panellists always included Renée Houston (who was rationed to saying "bloody" no more than three times per show); Sheila van Damm and Katharine Whitehorn also appeared quite often. Winn originally proposed a more serious show called *The Ombudswomen* but this lighter and funnier show came into existence instead.

Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev (15 April 1894 - 11 September 1971) was a Soviet politician who served as the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1953 to 1964 and as chairman of the country's Council of Ministers from 1958 to 1964. During his rule, Khrushchev stunned the communist world with his denunciation of Stalin's crimes and began de-Stalinisation. He sponsored the early Soviet space program, and enactment of relatively liberal reforms in domestic policy. After some false starts, and a narrowly avoided nuclear war over Cuba, he conducted successful negotiations with the United States to reduce Cold War tensions. His proclivity toward recklessness led the Kremlin leadership to strip him of power, replacing him with Leonid Brezhnev as First Secretary.



The College of Cardinals, or more formally the Sacred College of Cardinals, is the body of all cardinals of the Catholic Church. As of 10 August 2021, its current membership is 219. Cardinals are appointed by the pope for life. Changes in life expectancy partly account for the increases in the size of the college.



Vanessa Bell (née Stephen; 30 May 1879 - 7 April 1961, pictured left) was an English painter and interior designer, a member of the Bloomsbury Group, and the sister of Virginia Woolf.

Lady Isobel Barnett (born Isobel Morag Marshall; 30 June 1918 - 20 October 1980) was a Scottish radio and television personality, who had her highest profile during the 1950s and 1960s.



In 1953 Lady Barnett arrived on BBC television as one of the panel of *What's My Line?*, which made her a household name. She appeared on the programme for ten years. She also made regular appearances on the BBC radio series *Any Questions*, on the radio panel game *Many a Slip* and on the women's discussion series *Petticoat Line*. She was greatly in demand as an after-dinner speaker, a role into which she slipped confidently.

In her last years, Lady Barnett became reclusive and eccentric. In 1980 she was found guilty of shoplifting, and fined £75 for stealing a can of tuna and a carton of cream worth 87 pence from her village grocer. This brought her briefly back into the public eye; four days later on 20 October, she was found dead at her home in Cossington, Leicestershire.


A coroner's inquest subsequently ruled that Lady Barnett killed herself with an overdose of painkillers in her bath. During the inquest, police testified that she wore an extra spacious pocket, known as a poacher's pocket, inside her coat when she was caught stealing the groceries. Two days before her death, Lady Barnett told an interviewer she was a compulsive thief and had been shoplifting for years.

Lady Barnett's story was recounted by several of her friends and colleagues in a 1991 BBC Radio 4 documentary in the *Radio Lives* series, in which it was said that she gave no indication to any of her friends that she was planning to take her own life, and that she kept up a façade of "business as usual".

...continued on page 15 >

Book today for our hugely popular traditional high-flying pantomime for all the family!

**10 December –
3 January**



Peter Pan

Sponsored by



**Journey to Neverland for a high-flying Pantomime adventure you'll never forget!
The forever-young Peter Pan sails through the skies to bring Wendy and the Darling children to the Lost Boys' enchanted island, where the fearsome Captain Hook rules over the high seas.**

**Written by Tom Whalley and based on the timeless book by JM Barrie,
the Altrincham Garrick Playhouse brings you a perfect Pantomime for all the family.**

Fairies, mythical creatures, pirates, singing, dancing and flying!

Take the second star to the right and keep straight on 'til morning and we'll see you in Neverland!

BOOK NOW TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT!

Don't miss out! Contact the Box Office or visit us online for full details of performance times and ticket prices.

Suzie Wong is cockney rhyming slang for 'A Pong', or 'A Bad Smell'. The expression came from the 1960 British-American romantic drama film "The World of Suzie Wong", directed by Richard Quine and starring William Holden and Nancy Kwan. The screenplay by John Patrick was adapted from the 1958 stage play by Paul Osborn, which was based on the 1957 novel of the same title by Richard Mason. The film was probably ahead of it's time, and has come to be seen as a forerunner to 'Pretty Woman'.



Isaiah Berlin (1909-97) was a naturalised British philosopher, historian of ideas, political theorist, educator, public intellectual and moralist, and essayist. He was renowned for his conversational brilliance, his defence of liberalism and pluralism, his opposition to political extremism and intellectual fanaticism, and his accessible, coruscating writings on people and ideas. His essay Two Concepts of Liberty (1958) contributed to a revival of interest in political theory in the English-speaking world, and remains one of the most influential and widely discussed texts in that field.



Bruce Chatwin Charles Bruce Chatwin FRSL (13 May 1940 - 18 January 1989) was an English travel writer, novelist and journalist. His first book, In Patagonia (1977), established Chatwin as a travel writer, although he considered himself instead a storyteller, interested in bringing to light unusual tales. He won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for his novel On the Black Hill (1982), while his novel Utz (1988) was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize. In 2008 The Times ranked Chatwin as number 46 on their list of "50 Greatest British Writers Since 1945."



Sir Campbell Adamson Sir William Owen Campbell Adamson (26 June 1922 - 21 August 2000) was a British industrialist, who was best known for his work as director-general of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) from 1969 to 1976. In later life as Chairman of Abbey National, Adamson led the move to demutualise and convert it from a building society to a bank, and saw an overwhelming majority of the society's members support the move.



Creamola Pudding Rice cremola used to be sold during the 60s and 70s in a bright orange packet. Cremola was a milk pudding a little bit like semolina. Creamola Food Products Ltd was founded in 1904 to manufacture a brand of custard powder in Glasgow. By 1953, this was one of the largest food manufacturing factories in Scotland and was a house hold name. Creamola made a number of products including flavoured ground rice, custard powder, milk jellies, caramel desserts, foaming beverages, rice-custards and steamed pudding mix. Creamola Food Products Ltd became Rowlaw No 1 Ltd in 1991 and was dissolved in 1993.

Utility Furniture refers to furniture produced in the United Kingdom during and just after World War II, under a Government scheme which was designed to cope with shortages of raw materials and rationing of consumption. Introduced in 1942, the Utility Furniture Scheme continued into post-war austerity and lasted until 1952.



Screenings for Black History Month in October

Altrincham Garrick PICTUREHOUSE

Altrincham Garrick Picturehouse is proud to be celebrating Black History Month, October, by showcasing five outstanding films that honour black stories.



Saturday 2nd October, 7:30pm HIDDEN FIGURES

Three brilliant African-American women at NASA - Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan and Mary Jackson - serve as the brains behind one of the greatest operations in history: the launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit, a stunning achievement that restored the nation's confidence, turned around the Space Race and galvanised the world.

Sunday 10th October, 6:00pm BLACK PANTHER

After the death of his father, T'Challa returns home to the African nation of Wakanda to take his rightful place as King. When a powerful enemy suddenly reappears, T'Challa's mettle as King - and as Black Panther - gets tested when he's drawn into a conflict that puts the fate of Wakanda and the entire world at risk. Faced with treachery and danger, the young King must rally his allies and release the full power of Black Panther to defeat his foes and secure the safety of his people.



Saturday 16th October, 7:30pm TINA: WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT

Based on the life of the legendary Soul singer, Tina Turner - born Anna Mae Bullock - discovers her love of singing in her Tennessee church choir. She moves to St. Louis to pursue a career, and there she meets the charismatic Ike Turner who rechristens her Tina and offers to help her succeed. As a musical team, Ike and Tina take the charts by storm. But as his physical abuse worsens, Tina has to make the tough decision to leave Ike and set out on her own.



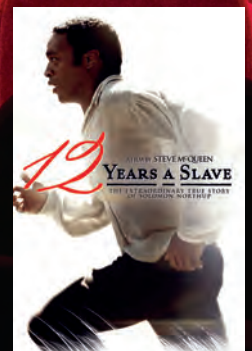
Sunday 17th October, 7:30pm 12 YEARS A SLAVE

In the years before the Civil War, Solomon Northup, a free black man from upstate New York, is kidnapped and sold into slavery in the South. Subjected to the cruelty of one malevolent owner, he also finds unexpected kindness from another, as he struggles continually to survive and maintain some form of his dignity. Then in the 12th year of his ordeal, a chance meeting with an abolitionist from Canada changes Solomon's life for ever.



Saturday 23rd October, 7:30pm BLACKKLANSMAN

Ron Stallworth is the first African-American detective to serve in the Colorado Springs Police Department. Determined to make a name for himself, Stallworth bravely sets out on a dangerous mission: infiltrate and expose the Ku Klux Klan. The detective soon recruits a more seasoned colleague, Flip Zimmerman, into the undercover investigation of a lifetime. Together, they team up to take down the extremist hate group as the organisation aims to sanitise its rhetoric to appeal to the mainstream.



Tickets £6. Garrick Friends £5. Book online today, or phone 0161-928 1677
(Please note: There is a £2.00 transaction fee for each individual payment made by telephone or online)

A New Musical by Gary Barlow and Tim Firth

CALENDAR GIRLS

THE MUSICAL

20 - 25
June
2022

BOOK
NOW!



Originally Produced by
David Pugh and Dafydd Rogers
and The Shubert Organisation

Based on the play
CALENDAR GIRLS
written by Tim Firth
and on the motion picture
CALENDAR GIRLS

Written by Tim Firth and Juliette Towhidi

The death of a much loved husband prompts a group of ordinary women in a small Yorkshire Women's Institute to do an extraordinary thing. Blasting away all preconceptions of what it is to be in a Women's Institute, they decide to do an artistic nude calendar to raise money for charity. Upturning preconceptions is a dangerous business and none of them expect the emotional and personal ramifications, but gradually the making of the fabulous and funny calendar brings each woman unexpectedly into flower.

The true story of the Calendar Girls launched a global phenomenon, a million copycat calendars, a record breaking movie, stage play and now a musical written by Tim Firth and Gary Barlow which coined the term "craughing" - the act of crying and laughing at the same time.

With unforgettable songs, every performance continues to add to the millions already raised for charity and also proves that there is no such thing as an ordinary woman.

This amateur production of "CALENDAR GIRLS: THE MUSICAL" is presented by special arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. www.concordtheatricals.co.uk