

Table Manners
Dir. Russell Hughes



JULY 2024

SCENE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEICESTER DRAMA SOCIETY

The
Little
Theatre

Visit our website for more information: thelittletheatre.co.uk



Editor's Letter

The summer season draws to a close with the charming production of *The Darling Buds of May*, directed by Mary Jones. This means it won't be long until the finalists of The Sooty Awards are in! The independent judges have attended every show of the year, scoring each production on factors such as set, costume, acting, and more. They'll soon be meeting to discuss their scores and decide their winners, ready to be revealed on August 3, which I have personally heard much excitement about from LDS members and those in the lets, our extended family. It's a night

of glitz, glamour, and well-deserved recognition – an evening certainly not to be missed!

Promotion for *Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors*, directed by Nikki Favell, was met with such enthusiasm that it already sold out a few weeks ago! We're thrilled by the community's support and the positive feedback we've received. Keep an eye on our what's on page and social media for details of exclusive performances, workshops, and community gatherings happening in July.

The Little will then go dark throughout August (post-Sooties) for

essential maintenance and repairs.

This is a necessary step to ensure our beloved theatre remains a safe and welcoming space for everyone.

We eagerly anticipate our grand reopening in September with a brand-new season, which we announced last month. The lineup includes a mix of classic dramas, contemporary comedies, and innovative new works. I'm also looking forward to performing on our stage with our extended family, KW Productions, in their production of *Beauty and the Beast*!

Kerry

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Scene

Editor of Scene ▶ **Kerry Smith**
Design of Scene ▶ **Cross Productions**

Contributions to Scene are invited. To ensure your submissions are used, please send them in by the 15th of each month for inclusion in the next month's issue. If you have a story, let us know before then to guarantee that we reserve space for you. Contact us via email on scene@thelittletheatre.co.uk

Vacancy: Minute Secretary

Required to attend and record the Board of Trustees' meetings. This is a voluntary position, and *not* a trustee role; therefore, the minute secretary will not have a vote on board matters.

Requirements:

- Attend monthly board meetings (usually the last Sunday of the month)
- Take minutes
- Write up and send minutes to the Company Secretary for review within a week, including a list of action points for the trustees
- Maintain a high-level of confidentiality & discretion
- Help maintain the smooth operation of the theatre

If interested, please contact company secretary, David Moore via david.moore@thelittletheatre.co.uk

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david.moore@thelittletheatre.co.uk

The Little Theatre

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From the archives: The cost of a theatre, circa 1934

Words by Lisa Thirlby

Cecil Chisholm published a book entitled *Repertory: An Outline of the Modern Theatre Movement* (London, Peter Davies Ltd) in 1934. While researching his book, Mr Chisholm visited many repertory companies, both professional and amateur, including Leicester's Little Theatre.

In a chapter titled 'Starting a Repertory Theatre', he states: "So soon as a society comes into possession of a theatre costs soar. At Leicester, for instance, it is found impossible to put on a play for a week for less than £120 [Ed: the equivalent of £10,763.06 in today's money]. In other words, you must take an average of £20 a night for a week to make ends meet.

"May I emphasise that to run an amateur repertory demands an enormously greater organisation than to run a professional one. The continuous running of the Leicester Little Theatre for amateur repertory is only made possible by the possession of the following assets:

- A society with 500 paying members
- A standing body of 120 amateur actors
- A voluntary scene-shifting corps
- A volunteer corps of attendants
- A group of experienced amateur producers
- A paid general manager
- A theatre to let for 36 weeks in the year
- Two halls to let throughout the year
- A paid designer of settings and an electrician (part-time)

"Until at least the skeleton of the first five items in this list has been built up, it may be unwise to launch out into building plans."



In another chapter titled 'Why Not Build Your Own Theatre?', he says: "Suppose an old building – church, mission hall, or schoolroom – be available, but no ideal site for building a new theatre, it is open to the local playgoers to do what the Leicester Drama Society has done. For that body now possesses a Little Theatre only slightly less perfect than that of Bournemouth, and certainly more luxurious than the Altrincham or Bath theatres.

"Yet Mr Herbert Pochin, the chairman, assures me that has not cost

more than £7,550 [Ed: the equivalent of £677,175.88 today]. Of course, this delightful Little Theatre has a poor entrance. It is almost impossible to do anything with the front elevation of the average Victorian public building. Yet it is difficult to pull down the front wall and replace it with even the quietest of modernised design without achieving a touch of the grotesque. It may be said that Leicester has achieved everything that the heart of the theatre lover could desire for his theatre save a gracious exterior."

What's On



The Darling Buds of May

by H.E. Bates
July 1-6, 2024
Directed by Mary Jones

A wonderfully warm-hearted adaptation by H.E. Bates of his novel that led to the 1991 television series.



Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors

by Gordon Greenberg and Steve Rosen
July 10-13, 2024
Directed by Nikki Favell

A quick-changing, laugh-out-loud reimagining of the gothic classic, Dracula.

VISITING PRODUCTIONS

Frank Sinatra: The Movie Years (July 20) – Award-winning singer Robert Habermann sings the great songs and tells the story of Ol' Blue Eyes' hugely successful movie career, from band singer to iconic Oscar winning worldwide star.

Seriously Collins (July 21) – Get ready to be transported back in time to relive the legendary hits of Phil Collins and Genesis! *Seriously Collins* is not just a tribute show; it's an electrifying journey through the music that has touched hearts and defined an era.

Word Up 80s (July 26) – Featuring some of the best musicians in the business, Word Up 80s will have you singing and dancing along to all of your favourite mega hits from the 1980s.

Cilla and the Swinging Sixties (July 28) – Starring the unforgettable voice as seen on ITV and previous West End Singer, Sandy Smith as Cilla, the show will take you on a rollercoaster journey through many of the greatest pop songs of the 60s including Cilla's own chart toppers 'Anyone Who Had A Heart', 'Alfie' and 'You're My World'.

Past Tents (July 30) – 'Past Tents' is a funny, dark and moving comedy about two desperate people at the end of their tent ropes, forced into each other's company. It's about life, death and how people need to talk more about the things they are going through. The play is also supported by Man Up? – the men's mental health charity.

REMINDER

**£10
TICKETS**

FOR LDS
MEMBERS

Don't forget that LDS members are entitled to one ticket (per member per show) at the discounted rate of £10 for the five LDS plays in our spring/summer season. These are available to purchase within a month of the production.

ELIGIBLE FOR THIS DISCOUNT ARE:

The Darling Buds of May (July 1-6)

Witness For The Prosecution (September 9-14)

Relative Values (September 30 - October 5)

Connections Report

June 4, 2024

Words by Jackie Caunt

After a void in May, Connections is back. We had five visitors in attendance, one of whom had recently joined and came along to the tour. David Taylor and I led the tour as Richard Payton was away on holiday.

We all introduced ourselves and I gave a brief talk about the theatre before we set off up the road to 52 Down. David stopped outside the Costume Hire entrance and explained why we can't get that up and running at the moment – bit sad really; would be lovely to see it being used again. We hurried on to 52 as it started to rain and we were a bit cold (is this really June!?).

We were welcomed into the rehearsal room by Russell Hughes, director of *Table Manners*, which will be done and dusted by the time you read this. We saw a bit of act one, where they were all sitting around the table, trying to have breakfast and being lectured by Norman (Allan Smith). Eventually, they all left the table and in came Norman's wife, Ruth (Tabz Fogg), who was as blind as a bat and had difficulty seeing the cereal boxes – never mind finding the milk and sugar – while she argued with Norman. I found this incredibly funny. I looked forward to seeing this one. Thank you, Russell, for allowing us a brief glimpse.

We returned to the main theatre building and had a look in the props cellar. One of the new people is interested in archiving, so we had a look in the archive room, and they were suitably impressed with the time scale; the earliest we found was 1912.

We had a quick look in the box office as there was some interest shown in helping there – I tried to impress them with how healthily we ate in the office; apples on show and a smidgeon of chocolate cake.

We looked in the studio, the workshop, and pointed out where the

costume design office is before we made our way up to the auditorium. We looked around the dressing rooms and arrived backstage to encounter several ladders and ongoing work for the *Table Manners* set. I was a bit cautious as to whether we could proceed, but Neil Reece checked for hazards and kindly let us continue.

We ventured under the stage and eventually headed back to the auditorium where we encountered set designer Sophie Zielonka. I had met up with Sophie earlier and they had informed me this was their first set for The Little. Sophie gave a small talk to the group about their concept for the set – looking good. Thank you, Sophie for giving us your time.

We then moved to the back of the auditorium where sound and lighting work was going on; Andy Crooks and Mark Harrison gave us some info on the technical part of the production. Thanks to you both. We returned to the bar where three people in the group signed up as members.

The next Connections is on Tuesday, June 25. Please come

along and refresh your memory of the theatre and feel free to invite a friend or family member to join you. You would be very welcome; please inform the office if you wish to attend – tuesdayconnection@thelittletheatre.co.uk or call 0116 255 1302.

CONNECTIONS DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES:

September 3

September 24



Member Profile:

Martin Bell

Words by Jackie Caunt

Dagenham-born Martin Bell (56) runs a drama group in The Little's studio for adults with learning difficulties, and they love him to pieces. He has directed eleven plays at The Little Theatre including *One Man Two Guvnors*, *Little Voice* and *God of Carnage*. He acts occasionally and enjoys helping out backstage.

Martin first visited the theatre with his parents, who took him and his sister to the panto at Cliffs Pavilion in Southend. These pantos always included a personality off the telly and Martin and his sister would pester them for autographs – he once bumped into singer and TV host, Lena Zavaroni!

At age 11, Martin was in his first school play, which was written by his English teacher Mrs Burroughs who wrote a musical called *Wenceslas*. He played the part of Vojak, a peasant boy who gets caught in a snowstorm while gathering winter fuel. Months afterwards, the older boys at school would go up to Martin in the playground and hand him random pieces of wood. Must have made an impression at an early age!

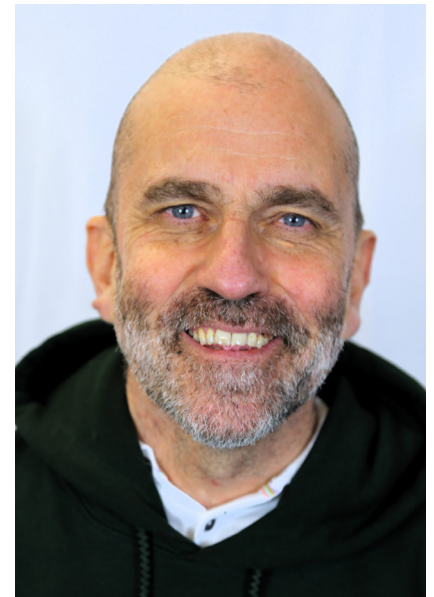
I asked the charity worker which play was his favourite to perform in and he told me he enjoyed playing the Dame in one of The Little Theatre's pantomimes. I remember that so well; I loved his performance of the Balero with Mike Bull. Martin says his all-time favourite role was in a production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Sorcerer*, and even though he didn't have any lines, he felt like Brad Pitt when he walked on stage. But it was mainly memorable because he had just met his future wife, Becky.

I wondered if Martin had a dream role that he'd yet to play.

He told me he feels he's a bit of a liability on stage these days, so they may be numbered. He says he sometimes forgets he's in scenes or arrives on stage too late for the line, and in *The Secret Garden*, Tom Young covered occasionally and did his bit! Martin admitted that nowadays he's more likely to see something he'd like to direct. He's currently looking forward to directing next season – keep an eye and an ear out for auditions!

Martin went on to tell me the best theatre show he'd ever seen was when Bond Girl Britt Ekland bought her one woman show to the theatre and Martin was in the crew. He bought her a bag of chips from Granby Fisheries! An example of the surprises you get from being part of our lovely Little theatre.

Martin Thank you, Martin, for sharing this with us. I have always followed Martin at the Little and



consider him to be one of our most versatile actors. If you can be a groupie at my age(!), then I'm a groupie where Martin is concerned!



Little Memories

In our regular feature, we invite our LDS and extended family members to share their memories of The Little Theatre, whether that be on stage, in rehearsal, in the audience, or anywhere else in the building. This month, Tom Young's recalls a favourite memory from one act play, Breaking & Entering

I was given the opportunity to stage a one-act play in the Haywood Studio in November 2023. My first time directing for LDS and one of my favourite experiences so far – it gave me the chance to stretch a different range of creative muscles. I was directing a play called *Breaking & Entering* about a couple who break into the house of another couple, only to discover that they're all each other's exes. Quite early in the rehearsal process, I noticed that the author, Mark Davenport, had started following the theatre on Instagram. Fair enough, considering we were producing his play. I dropped him a message to say hi and introduced myself.

The conversation quickly progressed to asking if he'd like to come and see the show, and it transpired he'd already booked. God

love him, he must've spent his entire royalty payment for the four-show run on his train ticket up from London! I mentioned to the cast that I'd spoken to him, but negated to mention that he was coming – they didn't need the extra pressure.

Show week rolled around, and opening night went well on the Thursday. Mark was attending on the Friday, and I actually found myself growing nervous during the day. I'd made a few slight changes to the original script – to start with, our cast were 20 years younger than the parts are written – and I'd added some ridiculous comedy moments for my own amusement.

Mark and I met in the bar beforehand and greeted each other warmly. However, as we went into the studio and took our seats, I deliberately sat where I couldn't see



Tom Young

his reaction! After the show, he came straight over to me – thankfully, with a huge smile.

"I hope you don't mind a few changes," I said, sheepishly. "No, it was great," Mark replied. "I loved what you did with it – I'd never thought about the ending that way. That's the best adaptation I've seen of it."

My heart soared and relief flooded through me. Then my mischievous side kicked in... I walked behind the screen to where the cast were waiting for the audience to leave.

"Well done guys – that was great... Do you want to meet Mark Davenport?"

"YOU'RE JOKING!" They exclaimed, stunned looks on each of their faces. Laughter and cast/author-hugging followed.

It was a lovely validation of our work, and an immediate sense of community with a relative stranger. A simple memory, but a pure moment of what theatre is all about.



Cast Announcement Relative Values

By Noël Coward

September 30 - October 5, 2024

Directed by John Bale

There is concern when the young Earl, Nigel, announces that he will marry a Hollywood actress. But the family are truly flummoxed when it is revealed that the young starlet's sister is Moxie, the Earl's mother's lowly maid! Taking matters into her own hands, the countess decides that – to protect the future of the family name – she must devise a way to stop the marriage to someone of such an undesirable class, leading to chaos breaking loose.

A classic Noël Coward comedy, *Relative Values* is a humorous take on the controversial subject of class relations, as Hollywood culture and English aristocracy collide, with disastrous consequences. An upstairs–downstairs satire of the complexities of snobbery and reverse snobbery, full of discriminating taste and dirty little secrets.

ADULT CAST (in order of appearance):

CRESTWELL - Steve Elliott

ALICE - Olivia Phillips

MRS "MOXIE" MOXTON - Alexandra Elliott

FELICITY, COUNTESS OF MARSHWOOD - Jane Durant

LADY HAYLING - Mary Delahunty

ADMIRAL SIR JOHN HAYLING - Andrew Webster

THE HON. PETER INGLETON - Allan Smith

NIGEL, THE EARL OF MARSHWOOD - Tom Young

MIRANDA FRAYLE - Nikki Favell

DON LUCAS - Keir Watson



Cast Announcements

We're delighted to reveal the casts of our October and November plays, as well as our annual pantomime. Congratulations to all!

Gaslight

By Patrick Hamilton

October 21 - 26, 2024

Directed by John Ghent



CAST

MRS MANNINGHAM - Joy Brankin-Frisby

MR MANNINGHAM - John Moulding

ROUGH - Robin Turner

ELIZABETH - Katy Weaver

NANCY - Chloe Drury

POLICEMEN - Jon Worthy & Ben White

CREW & CREATIVE TEAM

DIRECTOR - John Ghent

SET DESIGN - Phil Newman

LIGHTING DESIGN - Jeremy Thompson

SOUND DESIGN - Andrew Northcote

COSTUME DESIGN - John Bale

STAGE MANAGER - TBC

DSM - Victoria Kirk

PROPS - Jon Worthy

PROMPT - Grahame Austen

assisted by Jenny Page

Sheila's Island

By Tim Firth

November 11 - 16, 2024

Directed by Jane Towers

CAST

SHEILA - Alfi Levy

JULIE - Kat Seddon

DENISE - Mary Delahunty

FAY - Liz Kavanagh



Sleeping Beauty

December 13, 2024 - January 5, 2025

Devised and directed by John Bale



PRINCIPALS

PRINCESS AURORA - Sophie May

PRINCE RUPERT - Thom Jones

FAIRY FAIRWEATHER - Rose Bale

FAIRY CARABOSSE - Olivia Phillips

TICKLES THE JESTER - Russell Webster

DAME NANNY NIGHTNURSE - John Bale

KING SAT-UPON THE SEVENTH - Allan Smith

ENSEMBLE DANCERS

Caoimhe Gavagan

Emily Hammond

Lauren Leggett

Poppy Owen

Lydia Rushton

Remi Ward

CREATIVE TEAM

DIRECTOR - John Bale

MD - Paul Timms

Choreographer - Caroline Walsh

Sleeping Beauty will be on stage from December 13, 2024, to January 5, 2025. Tickets are on sale now.

200 Club Winners

The winners of June's draw:

1st Prize – 103

2nd Prize – 65

3rd Prize – 77

Join the 200 Club

Support Leicester Drama Society Ltd and be in with a chance of winning up to £250 every month

If you are aged 16 and over, please consider supporting Leicester Drama Society as we raise funds for the ongoing development of The Little Theatre.

Donate £60 and you will be entered into 12 monthly lottery draws. There are three cash prizes each month and at least 20% of the proceeds will be used for the ongoing development of The Little Theatre.

For further details and to enter call us on 0116 255 1302 or email hello@thelittletheatre.co.uk.



**Hands up!
Who's excited for...**



**THE
SOOTY
AWARDS
2024**

End of Year Celebration

**August 3, 2024
The Little Theatre
Dress Code: Formal/Black Tie**

Review: *Table Manners*

Words by Jackie Caunt

I came to the theatre with a complete lack of knowledge of this play. I had seen two short periods in rehearsal and really didn't know the plot. There isn't a huge one, as it's basically about a dysfunctional family.

The play begins when Sarah (Emma Bamford) arrives to look after her husband Reg's ageing mother (and to have a weekend off from her kids). The mother's main carer, long suffering daughter Annie (Holly Matusiewicz), is going off for a dirty weekend with her sister Ruth's husband, Norman (Allan Smith), in East Grimstead (and this location was a great source of amusement to the audience). Of course, Sarah is appalled.

We begin to see that Sarah is very controlling and probably OCD; you can feel her frustration with other members of the family and when she explodes, the audience goes into fits as she had built up the tension amazingly. The rest of the family also find out about Annie's dirty weekend plans, so at breakfast the following morning, with the weekend at East Grimstead abandoned, no one is talking to Norman. He soon realises and – totally unfazed – proceeds in



getting them to talk to him by foul means; Smith really sells this.

Norman's wife (and Annie and Reg's sister) Ruth (Tabz Fogg) shows up. She is blind as a bat; while arguing with Norman about how useless he is, he's perpetually locating the milk, sugar and cereal for her to eat breakfast, all of which were directly in front of her. I felt this was brilliantly done as you could feel Norman's frustration. When he tells Ruth he has found another woman and talks about their dirty weekend in East Grimstead, Ruth rolls about laughing, and she took us all with her.

We now have six to eat dinner, despite Annie having only prepared a salad for two people. The family have also been joined by Tom (Graham Muir), the local vet who is a friend of Annie's. How Tom became a vet is another question – if I were a horse, I would run a mile if he got near me! To say he was gormless is being kind, but brilliantly portrayed by Muir.

Knowing his sister Annie is not so hygienic on food preparation, Reg

(Freddie Dobrijevic) advises everyone to look for caterpillars and insects in their lettuce, also advising they drink a lot of Annie's homemade wine as it's lethal and will kill anything they eat. The audience fell about laughing at this and the pace and delivery were superb. When Reg asked for the centipede sauce, it was timed to perfection.

The set designed by Sophie Zielonka was their first for The Little and what a brilliant set it was; looking forward to seeing more sets by Sophie. Backstage, lighting, and sound were all done so brilliantly and well done to the props team – Autumn Rogerson, Kit Thorley and Deqa Xiddig – such a difficult job with this play.

Table Manners was brilliantly directed by Russell Hughes, with a very strong cast. On thinking more about the play, I realised if you took away all the banter, you would have a very unhappy family and I feel that came across; despite being a comedy, the poignancy was not lost.



Recent Photos: *Table Manners*

June's LDS production was one third of Alan Ayckbourn's Norman Conquests trilogy, *Table Manners*, directed by Russell Hughes. Three siblings and their mostly-significant others are inadvertently brought together for a weekend at their mother's house. Annie, who cares for their mother, had intended to take a rare weekend away... with her sister's husband, Norman. The plan quickly falls apart, leading to a weekend of uncomfortable conversations and meals prepared from the dregs of the larder. Audiences thoroughly enjoyed this play, with big laughs generated throughout the week.



"Hilarious show, loved it"



"It was brilliant!"





"Laugh out loud comedy at its best! Inspired casting. Great set. All in all, a damn fine show. In fact, seeing it again!"



All reviews and feedback taken from social media

The Building Turns 200

Words by Tom Young; based on information from Lisa & Rob Thirlby

For those who are unaware, The Little Theatre began its life as a Baptist Chapel, originally erected in 1824. That means that many parts of the current building are celebrating their bicentennial *this year*.

The original building extends from the wall of the front of house ladies loo to the backstage corridor, and incorporates the bar, studio and library on the ground floor and most of the auditorium on the first floor. It's commemorated by a foundation stone in the lift corridor (though not in its original position).

The roof is as built, though the slates are replacements and the first couple of metres at the stage-end of the roof structure had to be replaced after the fire in the 1950s. The concrete pillars in the library, studio and bar hold up the auditorium floor. The extension, which includes the office, workshop, paintshop, and flytower, was built after the fire.

Writing in *Before My Time: The Story of the Leicester Drama Society*, John Graham notes: "The building which was to be transformed into The Little Theatre had been erected in the nineteenth century and was originally a Baptist Chapel. Like other nonconformist chapels of the period, it had a high, flat ceiling and a gallery round three sides. But in 1919 it was purchased by the Independent Order of Rechabites, who removed the galleries and inserted a raked floor at gallery level. This newly created first floor was to become the auditorium of the new theatre, entered by two staircases which had served the old gallery."

Leicester Drama Society purchased the building for £14,000 in



1932 (the equivalent to £1,224,685.67 today) and renamed it as what we all know and love, The Little Theatre.

Keeping a 200-year-old building operating requires constant attention, maintenance and investment.

A huge thank you to our facilities team for their ongoing work, care, and developments.



Richard Attenborough as Lucius (lute player) in the LDS 1937 production of *Julius Caesar*.



YOUR CHARITY OF THE YEAR?

We're always looking for ways to ensure the long-term future of the theatre and would like to expand our business partnerships.

If your company has a designated charity of the year or other corporate social responsibility objectives, The Little Theatre's status as a registered charity would make it eligible for support.

Why choose The Little Theatre?

- The Little is predominantly run by volunteers, with everyone on stage and almost everyone backstage donating their time due to their love of theatre
- Leicester Drama Society (which owns the building) has been producing theatre in the city for over a century. Famous names like Richard Attenborough got their start on our stage
- We make theatre affordable and accessible to both audiences and performers
- Our thriving youth theatre is developing young talent and providing opportunities to perform
- The Little plays host to community groups from across Leicester, including several operatic societies
- It costs a lot to keep the building running; the original building was established as a Baptist Church in 1824, and keeping it running 200 years later is no easy feat!

Next time your company is looking for suggestions for its charity of the year, nominate The Little Theatre!

If you'd like to make the theatre your charity of the year, contact us via hello@thelittletheatre.co.uk

In The Spotlight



Name: Laura Heybrock

Age: 26

Profession: English as a Foreign Language teacher

Upcoming production: *The Darling Buds of May*

Noteworthy: *Continuum* - Bath Spa Productions (2019), *This Changes Everything* - Taking Flight Theatre (2019), *Around the World in 80 Days* - LDS (2020), *Chariots of Fire* - LDS (2021), *The Neat Freak* - Moon House Theatre (2021), *Breaking and Entering* - LDS (2023).

What was the first theatre show you saw?

I believe it was *The Lion King* on the West End when I was five. I went with my family to celebrate my aunty's 40th and all I can remember is a giraffe approaching me from the aisle in the opening number. It must have left an impression because years later, I performed in *The Lion King* as Rafiki! (Maybe one day, I'll be able to play the giraffe.)

What was the first play/musical you were in?

My very first experience of performing was in a dance show with The Leicester Dance Company. I was four years old and made my stage debut in *Aladdin* as a butterfly in Jasmine's garden and a jewel in the cave, adorned with a sparkly pink tutu and ballet shoes. My first performance for the general public was in *Hansel and Gretel*, the pantomime at The Y Theatre when I was six years old. After that, I pledged my allegiance to The Little Theatre and all of my further pantomime performances were there!

What's your favourite role you've played to date?

Ooh that's a tough one. Playing Audrey in *Little Shop of Horrors*

was an unforgettable experience, especially since I sprained my ankle mid-show and ended up in A&E... Another role that I adored was Helena in *All's Well That Ends Well*. I'm a big fan of Mr Shakespeare, and reciting soliloquies in the university's Italian garden with the beautiful summer weather and flowers in my hair made me feel like a princess! I loved the challenge of projecting my voice in the open air and there's something rather special about outdoor performances – especially Shakespeare.

What's your dream role that you're yet to play?

Despite not having performed in a musical for a while, a dream role would be to play Velma Kelly in *Chicago*. It seems fitting to keep with the Catherine Zeta-Jones theme! I'd also love to play Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*. I was cast in this role in 2020 but unfortunately, it never came to fruition due to lockdown. So, if the opportunity ever arose, I would absolutely love to be able to perform my interpretation of Juliet.

What's the best theatre show you've ever seen?

There are so many to choose from! My favourite show is *Miss Saigon*;

I love the soundtrack and the cast were amazing when I saw the touring production in Leicester. One that I recently loved was *Back to the Future* at the Adelphi Theatre, London; with its incredible set and fast pace, it really exceeded my expectations. My friend and I managed to get cheaper tickets on the day so that always helps!

What's your favourite thing about The Little Theatre?

I grew up at The Little, with my first show there being *Puss in Boots* at the ripe old age of seven. I was a junior dancer for many years and look back with fond memories of my Christmases filled with panto magic. Almost 20 years later, now a member of the LDS, I still see people who I worked with back then! It's a wonderful community of people who support each other and put on fabulous, professional standard shows; I feel very proud to be a part of it.

Tell us about your upcoming production!

The Darling Buds of May is a wholesome trip back to the fifties. With lovable characters and a charming story, it's the 'perfuck' way to finish the 2023-24 season.

At a glance

JULY



The Darling Buds of May

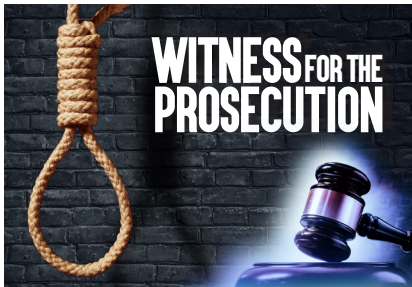
July 1-6

Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors

July 10-13



SEPTEMBER



Witness for the Prosecution

September 9-15

Disney's Beauty and the Beast

September 17-21



Relative Values

September 30-October 5

OCTOBER



The Wizard of Oz

October 8-12

Gaslight

October 21-26





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