

# THEATRE 2025

## February 2025: CURTAINS

Curtains was performed by the West Bridgford Operatic Society at the Squire Performing Arts Centre.

As well as being a musical, Curtains is also a comedy and a whodunit, with a fair bit of romance thrown in - an excellent choice for an amateur company.

The singing and acting were excellent, costumes were elaborate and colourful. And the choreography throughout was amazing, especially a solo routine by "Bambi"!

Altogether, a colourful, energetic, and very entertaining afternoon.

CB

## April 2025: ANIMAL FARM

George Orwell's novel Animal Farm has been adapted for the stage and this was a co-production between the Playhouses of Nottingham, Leeds and Stratford East. It's the story of a group of farm animals, aware that they do all the heavy work for no benefit, while the farmer abuses them and gets rich.

So the animals rebel and get rid of the farmer, determined to run the farm themselves along democratic lines. But the pigs become power-hungry. Hence the quotation "All animals are equal but some are more equal than others." The pigs are the new oppressors, become indistinguishable from the former owners and show the corrupting nature of power.

The identities of the animals were obvious by their movement and their sound, a neigh, a whinny, a bark, a snort. It was a hugely energetic, even acrobatic, performance, rather dark and loud. But this was not an easy watch.

It was brilliantly performed, but hugely unsettling. And highly topical with Orwell's warning of the corrupting nature of power gives the play an added poignancy for today.

CB

## May 2025: PRIVATE LIVES

Performed at the Lace Market Theatre yet another brilliant and entertaining show. It is a comedy written in 1930 and covers a divorced couple (Elyot and Amanda) who inadvertently visit the same hotel in adjacent rooms for their respective honeymoons with new spouses. Soon the former husband and wife discover each other's presence, and reignite their original passion for each other.

They each plead with their new spouses to leave the hotel at once but both Sibyl and Victor (the other halves) are uncooperative (surprise, surprise!) They each dine alone. Amanda and Elyot decide to flee the hotel without telling their spouses and end up in Amanda's apartment in Paris.

Needless to say they soon go back to what caused their divorce in the first place and end up in a vicious cycle, consumed by their problems. Whilst fighting, the new wife and new husband walk in. They too end up fighting trying to defend their respective spouses whilst Amanda and Elyot look on.

They covertly escape the scene which leaves us all wondering how they will get on I imagine ultimately phone calls to Relate! The play was superbly performed, with only five on stage the fifth being Louise the maid in Amanda's apartment. A very small role but totally entertaining.

An excellent afternoon and yet again ten out of ten for the Lace Market players.

Janet Whitchurch

### **May 2025: A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS**

This play is an adaptation of the novel of the same name by Khaled Hosseini. It is set in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1992 - the time of the ousting of the Soviets and the onset of Taliban control. It's the story of Laila, a teenage, educated girl, whose home is hit by a Soviet missile, leaving her a homeless, penniless, injured orphan. She is rescued by a neighbour, Rasheed, who, with his wife, Mariam, nurse her back to health.

Rasheed insists that Laila becomes his second wife. Very gradually a strong friendship develops between the two wives - a bond which makes Rasheed deeply jealous and he becomes increasingly violent.

This was a disturbing story about the lives of women in Afghanistan in the 21st century under Taliban control. Women are suppressed, deprived of education, expected to stay at home, deprived of any form of fulfilment. The play was a harrowing illustration of what we read every day in our newspapers.

Carolyn Broadhurst

### **May 2025: THREE MUSKETEERS**

Ask four people to cover thirty four parts in a play, complete with costume change, French accent and set pieces, and you'll all say "NO WAY"! However, with the stage manager, friends who had set up their own touring company did exactly that with the greatest enthusiasm and panache I have ever witnessed!!!

They retold the classic swashbuckling adventure of three musketeers (re-enacting Dumas' tale) and whilst I freely admit I couldn't keep up with the story I was so impressed with the cast and their Stage Manager that I was totally committed to watching the play to the end! Their vivacity and obvious enjoyment in their portrayal of different characters was a joy to watch! Well done you four! In fact thirty plus made up the crew from the director downwards, which made four of them (word perfect) performing truly remarkable. I never cease to be amazed at their talent.

Janet Whitchurch

### **September 2025: GASLIGHT**

This was a psychological thriller set in the late 1800's.

A newly wed wife lives a life constantly on the edge. She is manipulated by her husband into believing she is going insane in an effort to hide his past and search for hidden jewels. One night a knock at the door introduces a private investigator who claims her husband is not who she thinks he is, and she is in real danger. Can she trust him? Is she really losing her grip on reality.

It is a dark and thrilling play of a marriage shrouded in suspicion excellently performed as ever by the Lace Market theatre. Certainly a sit on the edge of your seat play.

Janet Whitchurch

### **October 2025: THE REVLON GIRL**

A heartbreaking play, funny and tragic. It had the right level of humour whilst not losing sight of the terrible tragedy in 1966 when the Aberfan disaster occurred and 116 children were buried alive in slip from the coal mine.

A real life story of group of bereaved mothers who meet on a regular basis to talk, cry and even laugh without feeling guilty. Touchingly tender, occasionally raw, a play that looks into the human heart of disaster and celebrates the humanity that survives. Brilliantly performed in the Studio.

Janet Whitchurch

**October 2025: LA SONNAMBULA**

Gorgeous singing in this opera broadcast by the New York Met.

The plot is slightly insane, even for opera, but the principals acted and sang their hearts out and the large chorus of adults and children were constantly in motion to add to the music and action.

Why not try these world class performances, available for a few quid at your local cinema?

Paul Martinez

**November 2025: HOME, I'M DARLING**

We were enthralled by this sophisticated comedy of modern manners from the Lace Market Theatre. The acting was uniformly good; the play involving with several moments of high drama, and the set and lighting perfect for the play.

I sat right in the back of the theatre but could still hear and see everything. If you've never been to a Lace Market performance, you're really missing out.

Paul Martinez