

Lewes Little Theatre

A Conversation with Philip Ayckbourn

Our Little Surprise Lewes Little Theatre is back in business once again!

No. 90

March 2021

Audition Notice:
A Celebration of Shakespeare

Newsletter

Recent Government announcements have given us all hope that the reopening of our theatre for live performances is now in sight. How many of us who were enjoying *A Christmas Carol* back in December 2019 realised that it would be well over a year before we could come back again? Of course nothing is certain, and a lot will depend on what happens in the coming weeks, but rest assured we are ready and waiting to reopen our doors just as soon as it is safe to do so. Artistic Director Shaun Hughes has put together a lively and imaginative series of events to entertain us in the weeks and months ahead.

we hope that the position regarding live performances on stage will be a little clearer. It is possible that social distancing will still be needed, in which case we have two productions lined up that will enable us to meet the guidelines. Finally, Shaun is planning a full season of plays commencing in October to take us through to the summer of 2022, in the hope that we will then be approaching some kind of normality. But, if not, we will continue to be flexible to ensure that we bring you quality, live local theatre.

Those of you who have passed the theatre lately will have noticed that the front of the building has had a much needed facelift. Not only that, the auditorium has been fully redecorated. So one way and another there's a lot to look forward to, beginning with our on-line mini season beginning later this month. So get booking!

Following the recent success of *Dickens at Christmas*, we will begin with three more fascinating and very different on-line events, *Our Little Surprise*, *A Conversation with Philip Ayckbourn* and *A*

Celebration of Shakespeare. Full details are given in this newsletter. Tickets for all three are available now for the special price of just £7.50.

This will take us to the beginning of May when

Our Little Surprise

In the run up to what we hope will be the reopening of the theatre in the summer, we will be presenting three more live events performed on line, following the success of *Dickens at Christmas* in December.

The first will be a brand new one act play, *Our Little Surprise*, written by local author David Lindsay specifically for live performance on line by two actors. There will be five performances between Tuesday 23 and

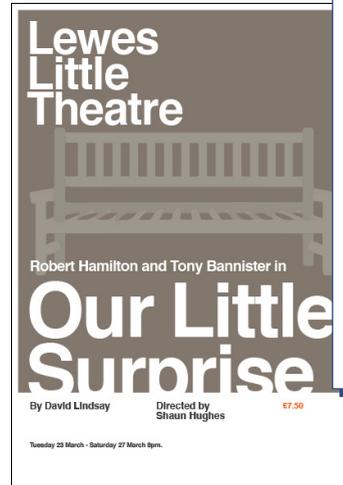
Saturday 27 March, curtain up 8.00 pm. Performed by Tony Bannister and Robert Hamilton, the play concerns two brothers who meet for the first time in fifty years in

a place neither knows, and in circumstances neither has expected.

Booking details for *Our Little Surprise* are given below. When you purchase your ticket, you will receive an exclusive link to view the live performance on line. Watch it on your own, with your partner or family: the price is the same!

'Our Little Surprise is about brothers Trevor and Stephen, who meet unexpectedly having spent almost fifty years living on opposite sides of the world with no contact. Through a series of memoirs and short conversations, we are given glimpses of their lives and the triumphs and tragedies that have shaped them. Above all, we learn about the one thing that drove them apart, but at the same time formed an unbreakable bond between them: their family.'

Author David Lindsay



A Conversation with Philip Ayckbourn

On Friday 23 April, Shaun Hughes will be in conversation with the Lewes playwright - Philip Ayckbourn - about his life, his work and his plans for the future. You will have the opportunity not only to listen in, but to put your own questions to Philip in an inclusive Q&A session.

Philip Ayckbourn trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) and then in 1998 he jointly set up Quorum Theatre Company, a touring theatre-in-education company based in France, where he wrote and directed plays. PCK Productions followed in 2010 and PNA Plays Ltd in 2015 and he

continues to write, produce and direct his own plays in the UK. A number of plays have premiered at Lewes Little Theatre in recent years, including *Physic Connections*, *Loving Androids*, and *Timeshare*.

Philip has graciously agreed to be interviewed by the new artistic director,

Shaun Hughes. Philip's career to date has been a roller-coaster ride, and he will be sharing some of his memories, ideas and thoughts on writing and theatre. The interview will cover the past present and future for Philip.

There will be a chance for the audience to ask questions at the end of the talk. So please join us to celebrate the work of this exceptional local play write. Booking details are given below. Come and join us for what promises to be a fascinating evening devoted to what we all enjoy: talking theatre!

Audition Notice: A Celebration of Shakespeare

An anthology devised and directed by Shaun Hughes
 Audition date: Monday 12 April 8.00pm
 Performance dates: Tuesday 4 - Saturday 8 May 2021
 (N.B. Audition and all performances to be conducted online via Zoom)

Auditions

Following the amazing success of *Press Cuttings* by Bernard Shaw and *Dickens at Christmas*, Lewes Little Theatre are presenting *A Celebration of Shakespeare* to be performed online via Zoom. The show will be performed each evening live to the audience.

The show will consist of some of the most famous speeches from William Shakespeare's plays including: *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Henry V*, *Richard II*, *Richard III*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *As You Like It*, *King Lear*, *Henry IV*, *The Merchant*

of Venice and many more monologues, duologues and scenes with a group performance as a finale.

Actors of all ages and gender are invited to attend the online auditions on Monday 12 April at 8pm. You may audition for speeches that are not usually allocated to your age of gender. As an example, if you are a grandmother and want to read for Hamlet, please go ahead, if you are in your 20s and want to read for King Lear, please go ahead. Shakespeare is not restrictive and open to all. Many modern productions change the age and gender of roles, and we are no different.

It is intended that each actor will have at least one speech and form part of the finale. Actors will not have to learn the pieces, only be aware and have a strong knowledge of the pieces. Just like *Dickens at Christmas* actors will read the speeches at each performance. There will be approximately two weeks of rehearsals with three rehearsals each week. There will be the possibility of the Sunday before the run as a 'big Sunday' and then the show will have a dress rehearsal on the Monday with first night on Tuesday at 8pm. Then each night up to Saturday, a total of 5 performances.

If you would like to audition, please register your interest by email to anthonybannister1@sky.com, by no later than Friday 9 April.

Shaun Hughes

William Shakespeare (26 April 1564 – 23 April 1616)



Shakespeare was an English playwright, poet, and actor, widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's greatest dramatist. He is often called England's national poet and the 'Bard of Avon'. His extant works, including collaborations, consist of some 39 plays, 154 sonnets, three long narrative poems. The plays have been translated into every major language, some invented Sci Fi languages and are performed more often than those of any other playwright.

They also continue to be studied and reinterpreted across the world.

Shakespeare was born and raised in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, England. At the age of 18, he married Anne Hathaway, with whom he had three children: Susanna and twins Hamnet and Judith. Around 1585, he began a successful career in London as an actor, writer, and part-owner of a playing company called the Lord Chamberlain's Men, under Queen Elizabeth I, and later known as the King's Men, in the reign of James I. At age 49, he retired to Stratford-upon-Avon, where he died three years later.

Few records of Shakespeare's private life survive; this has stimulated considerable speculation about such matters as his physical appearance, his sexuality, his religious beliefs, and whether the works attributed to him were written by others. Shakespeare produced most of his known works between 1589 and 1613. His early plays were primarily comedies including:

Two Gentlemen of Verona, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night* and histories including: *Richard III*, *Henry VI* and *Henry V*, and are regarded as some of the best work produced in these genres. He then wrote mainly tragedies until 1608, among them *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, all considered to be among the finest works in the English language.

Many of Shakespeare's plays were published in editions of varying quality and accuracy in his lifetime. However, in 1623, two fellow actors and friends of Shakespeare's, John Heminges and Henry Condell, published a more definitive text known as the *First Folio*, a posthumous collected edition of Shakespeare's dramatic works that included all but two of his plays. The volume was prefaced with a poem by Ben Jonson, in which Jonson presciently hailed Shakespeare in a now-famous quote as 'Not of an age, but for all time'.

Become a Member

There are a number of benefits to becoming a Member at Lewes Little Theatre. As a Member you will receive a reduced ticket price - £8 rather than the usual £12 and for the matinee performances you'll pay £6 rather than the usual £8.

Members at Lewes Little Theatre also have the opportunity to participate in productions and help out with all aspects of the theatre's operations from set building to running the Anthony Jenner Bar.

All Members will receive the newsletter which is sent out two weeks before each main stage production.

There are four Membership options; Single, Double, Concession and Double Concession.

*Concessions are under 17s, full-time students or seniors.

You can join at any time but membership subscriptions become due for renewal in August.

Membership Form /renewal

Membership no.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Title	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Forename	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Surname	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>	
Postcode	<input type="text"/>	
Phone number	<input type="text"/>	
E-mail address	<input type="text"/>	

I would like to receive theatre news and updates by email

Membership options (tick one)

Single	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>	Concession	£10	<input type="checkbox"/>
Double	£25	<input type="checkbox"/>	Double Concession	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please send to Lewes Little Theatre, Lancaster Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2PX. Cheques payable to Lewes Theatre Club

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