



THE NORWICH

PLAYERS

2020
SEASON
LAUNCH

SATURDAY, 14TH SEPTEMBER 2019
MADDERMARKET.CO.UK

MADDERMARKET THEATRE, ST JOHN'S ALLEY, NORWICH NR2 1DR

2020 SEASON

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Winnie the Pooh by A. A. Milne, adapted by Glyn Robbins

For casting breakdowns and details of how to apply visit maddermarket.co.uk
(Information will be live on the site from Monday 16 September)

JANUARY

Crude Apache in association with The Norwich Players at The
Maddermarket Theatre present

At the Turning of The Tide

by Crude Apache

22nd - 25th January 2020 (5 performances)

About Crude Apache: A local community-centred theatre collective who have been making theatre in almost every conceivable location around Norfolk since 1993. Their diverse output is especially notable for both new work celebrating East Anglian history and radical interpretations of Shakespeare. Common to their productions is a buoyant energy, an ensemble spirit and the use of live music.

About the Play: The 19th century, and on the wide open landscape of the Norfolk Broads the working wherries ply their trade. From Norwich and Yarmouth they carry the barrels and bales and bricks and coal to and from the people who belong to the villages of this desolate landscape. Now into this timeless place comes a new technology which brings prosperity but also change. And for some the change is not welcome. This play tells the story of one family caught up in this decisive time, their triumphs and disasters, their hopes and fears. Based on the critically acclaimed show which toured the Broads last summer, the play has been developed and re-designed for The Maddermarket.

Director: Jo Eyde

Audition dates: Monday 23rd September 2019 (19:30 - 21:00) & Tuesday 24th September (19:30 - 21:00)

Rehearsals begin: October, dates to be arranged following casting.

Casting Breakdown: A wide variety of parts big and small for both male and female actors for characters ranging aged 14 to 60, including wherryman, their wives, sons and daughters and businessman and boatyard owners.

For this production all audition interest and requests for production information should be made directly to Jo Eyde: realjoedyde@gmail.com

FEBRUARY

The Norwich Players present

Wuthering Heights

by Jo Clifford, from the novel by Emily Bronte

21st - 29th February 2020 (10 performances)

World amateur premiere of the haunting adaptation on the 25th anniversary of its' premiere.

About the Play: Last performed in 1995 and never published, this adaptation of Emily Bronte's gothic classic by the great Scottish Playwright Jo Clifford brings to the forefront the captivating tale of passion, anger, and unachieved desire.

Director: Sabrina Poole

Audition dates: 1st round - 8th October 2019 (19:00 - 22:00) & 13th October (14:30 - 17:30). Recalls - 27th November 2019 (19:00 - 22:00)

Rehearsals begin: Week of 6th January 2020, with one or two rehearsals before Christmas

Casting Breakdown: 10 characters, minimum cast of 6 with doubling.

CATHY (late teens - 20's): Headstrong, selfish and wild, torn between passion and ambition.

HEATHCLIFF (late teens - 20's): Powerful and fierce, made cruel by the cruelty of others.

HINDLEY (20's - early 30's): Cathy's brother, resentful of the favour shown to Heathcliff.

NELLY (20's): A servant to the Earnshaw's and later Cathy, sensible and compassionate.

MR EARNSHAW (40's - 60s): Cathy and Hindley's father, adopts Heathcliff into the family and serves as his protector against Hindley's attacks.

DR KENNETH (50+): The local doctor, more interested in drinking than his patients.

MR LINTON (40's - 60's): Father of Isabella and Edgar, proper and prim, appalled at the behaviour of the Earnshaw children.

FRANCES (20's - 30's): Hindley's wife, silly and simpering.

EDGAR (20's): Rival for Cathy's affections with Heathcliff, well-bred but spoilt.

ISABELLA (teens - 20's): Edgar's sister. Spoilt and naïve, thinks of Heathcliff as a romantic hero.

MARCH

The Norwich Players present

And Then There Were None

by Agatha Christie

20th - 28th March 2020 (10 performances)

A mysterious host. Guests with dark secrets. Murders galore. Classic Christie.

About the Play: Ten strangers are summoned to a remote island. Each has a wicked past they're unwilling to reveal. As the weather turns and the group is cut off from the mainland, the bloodbath begins and one by one they are brutally murdered.

Director: Jez Pike

Audition dates: 1st round - 17th November 2019 (15:30 - 18:30) & 24th November (15:30 - 18:30). Recalls - 27th November 2019 (19:00 - 22:00)

Rehearsals begin: Week of 3rd February 2020

Casting Breakdown: Cast size of 11 (8 males, 3 female). Ages are playing ages only.
ETHEL ROGERS (40-60): Housekeeper and wife of Mr Rodgers. Damaged and fearful.
THOMAS ROGERS (40-60): The butler. Duplicitous, fawning and cruel.
FRED NARRACOTT (40+): Boatman who delivers the guests and later discovers their bodies.
VERA CLAYTHORNE (25-35): A secretary. Her general decency is hostage to her darker self.
PHILIP LOMBARD (30-40): Made his life in Africa as a mercenary. A predator with no morality.
ANTHONY MARSTON (20-30): A playboy and petrol-head, blessed with looks and charisma.
D.S. WILLIAM BLORE (40-55): A boorish police detective moonlighting as 'security'.
GENERAL MACKENZIE (60+): A war hero, haunted by the the horrors he has witnessed.
EMILY BRENT (40-55): A prudish spinster and dedicated Anglican with strict morals.
SIR LAWRENCE WARGRAVE (65+): The notorious 'Hanging Judge'. Now a diminished figure: profoundly frail and battling against a crumbling memory
DR. ARMSTRONG (45-55): Confidence, success and wealth fail to disguise the ugly temper of this Harley Street physician.

APRIL

The Norwich Players present

Les Liaisons Dangereuses

by Christopher Hampton, from the novel by Pierre Choderlos de Laclos

17th - 25th April 2020 (10 performances)

Deceit, desire and decadence in the twilight years of the French aristocracy.

About the Play: Set on the eve of the French Revolution, the Marquise de Merteuil and the Vicomte de Valmont play a dangerous game of seduction, corrupting the innocent and the virtuous for their own gratification. Premiering in 1985, it won the Evening Standard Award for Best Play and the Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Play, and received Tony and Drama Desk Award nominations on its Broadway transfer. Hampton adapted it for the screen in 1988 in a version starring Glenn Close and John Malkovitch.

Director: John Holden

Audition dates: 1st round - 25th November 2019 (19:00 - 22:00) & 26th November (19:00 - 22:00). Recalls - 28th November 2019 (19:00 - 22:00) & 1st December 2019 (14:30 - 17:30)

Rehearsals begin: Week of the 24th February 2020

Casting Breakdown: 6 female roles and 3 male roles, plus various servants.

LA MARQUISE DE MERTEUIL (40+): A woman of experience

MADAME DE VOLANGES (40+): Merteuil's cousin and Cecile's mother

CECILE VOLANGES (must be 18+ but with a playing age of 16-20): Just left convent school, ignorant of the ways of the world

LE VICOMTE DE VALMONT (40+): A man of experience

AZOLAN (20+): Valmont's valet

MADAME DE ROSEMONDE (60+): Grandmotherly but lively, intelligent and sympathetic

LA PRESIDENTE DE TOURVEL (20-30): Beautiful, but pious and chaste

EMILIE (20-30): A courtesan

LE CHEVALIER DANCENY (20+): A Knight of Malta, eager and handsome

MAY

The Norwich Players present

The Rise and Fall of Little Voice

by Jim Cartwright

22nd - 30th May 2020 (10 performances)

Gritty Northern rag-to-riches comedy about a shy girl with a big voice

About the Play: Set amongst the dark satanic mills, terrace houses, and working men's clubs in the North of England, this is the story of Little Voice, and her larger than life, out of control mother Mari. Desperately missing her dead father, Little Voice spends her time locked in her bedroom listening to his old record collection and perfecting astonishing impersonations of famous divas including Shirley Bassey, Marilyn Monroe, Judy Garland, and Dusty Springfield. When Mari starts dating small-time club agent Ray Say, she thinks he's her last chance for a better life. When Ray Say hears Little Voice sing, he thinks she's his ticket to the big time. Little Voice just wants a normal life and to be loved.

Director: Nick Meir

Audition dates: 1st round - 1st December 2019 (11:00 - 14:00) & 3rd December (19:00 - 22:00). Recalls - 5th December 2019 (19:00 - 22:00)

Rehearsals begin: Circa week of the 6th April 2020

Casting Breakdown: Please note that the character of Mari (Little Voice's mother) is already cast.

LV (LITTLE VOICE) (playing age 18-25): Painfully shy, borderline autistic, extraordinary singing voice. Hates being in the spotlight and the more she sings at the club the less she is herself. Eventually confronts her mother for neglecting her father and treating her like garbage.

RAY (playing age 50s): The talent manager who is dating Mari. Pushy, brusque, and selfish.

BILLY (playing age 18-25): Telephone repair man. Hopeless and hapless romantic. Falls for LV.

MR. BOO (Playing age 30+): Nightclub owner. Signs LV on. Could be a character out of "Phoenix Nights". Greedy, larger than life, and canny.

SADIE (playing age 40s/50s): Mari and LV's neighbour. Could be a character from the Rovers Return. Few lines, but lots of stage time. Constant onlooker, nosey-parker and drinker of tea.

JUNE

The Norwich Players present

Chips With Everything

by Arnold Wesker

19th - 27th June 2020 (10 performances)

Radical production of a classic 1960's state of the nation drama.

About the Play: 1950s. A group of Air Force conscripts begin eight weeks of 'square-bashing' - basic military drill. Two of the conscripts develop a friendship, Pip - a young aristocrat and Chas - a working class boy. The military hierarchy want Pip to become an officer. He rebelliously refuses. The officers patiently tolerate his rebellion thus defusing it and breaking his spirit. When Smiler, one of the recruits, is singled out and bullied by NCOs, the other recruits rebel. Pip, who has just accepted to become an officer, urges the hierarchy to tolerate their rebelliousness as they had tolerated his and thus, similarly, defuse their anger. The young recruits who began as a shambles end as an efficient, closely linked and acquiescent squad.

Director: Jen Dewsbury

Audition dates: 1st round - 2nd December 2019 (19:00 - 22:00) & 4th December 2019 (19:00 - 22:00) & 8th December 2019 (14:00 - 17:00). Recalls - 10th December 2019 (19:00 - 22:00) & 12th December 2019 (19:00 - 22:00, studio)

Rehearsals begin: Week of the 4th May 2020

Casting Breakdown: The play was written for and has always been performed by a cast of entirely male actors. This production will take a radical new approach. A cast of actors identifying as female and/or gender non-conforming (GNC) will play the male characters, to discover and challenge the plays innate notions of masculinity and gender-orientated power structures.

THE RAF CONSCRIPTS: Nine parts on offer for actors with a playing age of 18-25 (actual character ages range from 17-19 years). Whilst Pip, Chas and Smiler are the most prominent recruits in the story, all roles are well drawn and form an ensemble at the heart of the play. **OFFICERS:** Five parts on offer for actors with playing ages ranging from 30's to mid-50's. These include a Wing Commander and a Squadron Leader both upper-crust and a hygiene obsessed Pilot Officer.

NCO'S AND OTHERS: Seven other characters (a few of which may be multi-rolled). Playing ages Mid-20's to 40's. They include a benevolent Corporal and obsessive P.T. Instructor, as well as other Corporals, Airmen and Guards.

JULY

The Norwich Players present

Our Man in Havana

by Graham Greene, adapted by Clive Francis

17th - 25th July 2020 (10 performances)

Mad-cap adaptation of much-loved satirical novel.

About the Play: "You should dream more, Mr. Wormhold. Reality in our century is not something to be faced." Jim Wormhold, an unsuccessful Hoover salesman is recruited by MI6 to run a spy ring in 1950s Cuba. Problem is he doesn't know any spies so he makes up a list of "agents" from the local social club's membership & fakes photos of missile installations. Soon reality begins to mirror his "fake news" and innocent people start dying. In Clive Francis' adaptation, Graham Greene's classic satirical novel becomes a wonderfully funny and fast-moving romp.

Director: John Mangan

Audition dates: 1st round - 16th January 2020 (19:00 - 22:00) & 17th January 2020 (19:00 - 22:00). Recalls - 18th January 2020 (14:00 - 17:00)

Rehearsals begin: Week of the 1st June 2020

Casting Breakdown: 3 Males and 2 Females (but can be expanded) play a multitude of parts

JIM WORMHOLD (35-45)

MILLY WORMHOLD (16ish): Jim's Daughter

BEATRICE SEVERN (20s-30s): MI6 agent sent to help Wormhold

CAPTAIN SEGURA (40s-50s): A very bad man, in love with Milly

HAWTHORNE (40s -60s): MI6 spymaster

DR.HASSELBACHER (50s-70s) world-weary humanitarian

CARTER (any age): Assassin

LOPEZ (any age): Wormhold's shop assistant

Plus nuns, madams, dancers, singers, spies, many citizens of Havana & The Queen

AUGUST

The Norwich Players present

Comedy of Errors

by William Shakespeare

20th - 23rd & 28th - 31st August 2020 (10 performances)

Knockabout picnic production for parks around Norwich.

About the Play: A shipwreck, twins...more twins, silliness, stupidity and mayhem ensues capped off with a happy ending. One of Shakespeare's earliest comedies it's the closest he came to writing a farce. This production will hone down, edit and generally play mischief with the text to create a fast accessible play suitable for both first-time theatre tots and lazy afternoons with prosecco in the park.

Locations: An outdoor production in a park or parks around Norwich. Details TBC

Director: Jez Pike

Audition dates: 1st round - 15th February 2020 (11:00 - 13:00) & 16th February 2020 (11:00 - 13:00). Recalls - 22nd February 2020 (11:00 - 13:00) & 23rd February 2020 (11:00 - 13:00)

Rehearsals begin: Circa week of the 29th June 2020

Casting Breakdown: Casting will be all about creating a group of generous, versatile and inventive mayhem-makers. It will not be Shakespeare for the purist and no experience with Shakespeare's text is required. The production is seeking actors who are attracted to the project not by specific parks but by the sense of adventure that creating outdoor theatre entails. Performances are quite likely to coincide with a heatwave and one can never quite predict what will happen outside the safety-net of an auditorium. Physical stamina, positivity, perseverance and a pioneering spirit will be most valued in the casting process. The text will be edited and the concept created following casting to fit the talents assembled. Auditions are therefore open to absolutely everyone.

SEPTEMBER

The Norwich Players present

Great Expectations

by Charles Dickens, adapted by Neil Bartlett

18th - 26th September 2020 (10 performances)

A lively storytelling adaptation for a versatile ensemble cast.

About the Play: After meeting an escaped convict on the Kent marshes, orphan Pip is called to the house of rich, eccentric Miss Havisham and meets the beautiful Estella. Years later he comes into a fortune that brings him 'great expectations'. But his benefactor is not whom he thought, a truth he discovers in a deadly climax that leaves him scarred for life.

Director: Tony Fullwood

Audition dates: 1st round - 6th April 2020 (19:00 - 22:00) & 8th April 2020 (10:00 - 13:00). Recalls - 12th April 2020 (14:00 - 17:00) & 13th April 2020 (19:00 - 22:00)

Rehearsals begin: Week of the 28th July 2020

Casting Breakdown: Cast size of approximately nine. One actor will play each of Pip (c18-25), Miss Havisham (40+) and Estella (c18-25) but the rest will make an age and gender-fluid ensemble playing multiple characters from Dickens' gallery of caricatures such as Mrs Joe, Uncle Pumblechook, Mr Jaggers, Mr Wopsle and Bentley Drummle, and gentler characters like Joe Gargery, Biddy and Herbert Pocket. Each actor will benefit from contrasting roles to play. The ensemble also presents the action of the story through strong physicality, voice work and movement. Majority of cast are on stage for most scenes.

OCTOBER

The Norwich Players present

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz

by Caroline Bird, from the novel by Frank Baum, in a version for today

16th - 24th October 2020 (10 performances)

About the Play: A 're-imagined' version of the classic tale, this hilarious comedy features a huge cast of impossible characters, puppets galore, and more than a little bit of stage magic. Originally premiered in 2015, this is a hugely exciting opportunity to make something epic, funny and enjoyable for kids and adults alike.

Director: Sam Webber

Audition dates: 1st round - 7th April 2020 (19:00 - 22:00) & 10th April 2020 (19:00 - 22:00). Recalls - 12th April 2020 (10:00 - 13:00)

Rehearsals begin: Week of the 31st August 2020

Casting Breakdown: Mixed gender cast of approximately 14-16 actors, including a large number of multi-role parts. All roles apart from Dorothy can be any age. No American accents required.

DOROTHY (Playing age 12-18): The protagonist of the story, who also controls Toto the Dog

THE WICKED WITCH OF THE WEST: A downtrodden witch distinctly lacking in magical powers.

THE SCARECROW: A rather clever scarecrow convinced he has no brain.

THE TIN MAN: A woodsman who's accidentally chopped off his limbs and had them replaced with tin.

THE LION: A cowardly king of the forest, who pines to end his stammer and declare his love for his (squirrel) secretary

OTHERS (multi-role parts): The boring inhabitants of Greysville, an Army of Mice, Munchkins, Fighting Trees, Flying Monkeys, Talking Crows, The Wizard, The Witch of the East, The Good Witch, Emerald Guards, Slaves, Squirrel Secretary, a Crystal Ball, a Pelican, a Frog, a Ghost, a 'Pretend Receptionist.'

DECEMBER

The Norwich Players present

Winnie the Pooh

by A. A. Milne, adapted by Glyn Robbins

12th - 31st December 2020 (18 performances)

A pure and faithful adaptation in an innovative production

About the Play: Like the pages of the books have just been lifted onto the stage. Everyone you'd expect is there, Christopher Robin, Kanga, Roo, Piglet, Tigger, Eeyore and Owl, not forgetting the Bear of Very Little Brain himself, Pooh. We follow their adventures involving bees, balloons, boats and birthdays in the 100 Aker Wood.

Director: Jez Pike

Audition dates: 1st round - 7th June 2020 (10:00 - 13:00) & 10th June 2020 (19:00 - 22:00). Recalls - 14th June 2020 (10:00 - 13:00) & 15th June 2020 (19:00 - 22:00)

Rehearsals begin: Circa week of the 26th October 2020

Casting Approach : The production will have two casts. One will be creating a radio play – concentrating on the perfect voice work. In performance this recording will then be synced to a live action mime performance played by actors in full 'mascot' style costumes. The image of the animals will therefore be unhindered by the usual compromise for face and vocal projection. The actors playing them will be able to fully immerse themselves in the physicality of their character. 'Live' parts will therefore suit actors excited by an exploratory physical process and with good stamina (the costumes will get warm!) The payoff is there will be no lines to learn. Recording with scripts in hand the radio actors also have no lines to learn and don't need to be available over Christmas for the performances.

Parts are therefore for available for actors of all ages, talents and availabilities. Only the part of Robin will 'walk and talk', played by a child actor.