

FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS



Out of Focus

22 - 30 October 2021

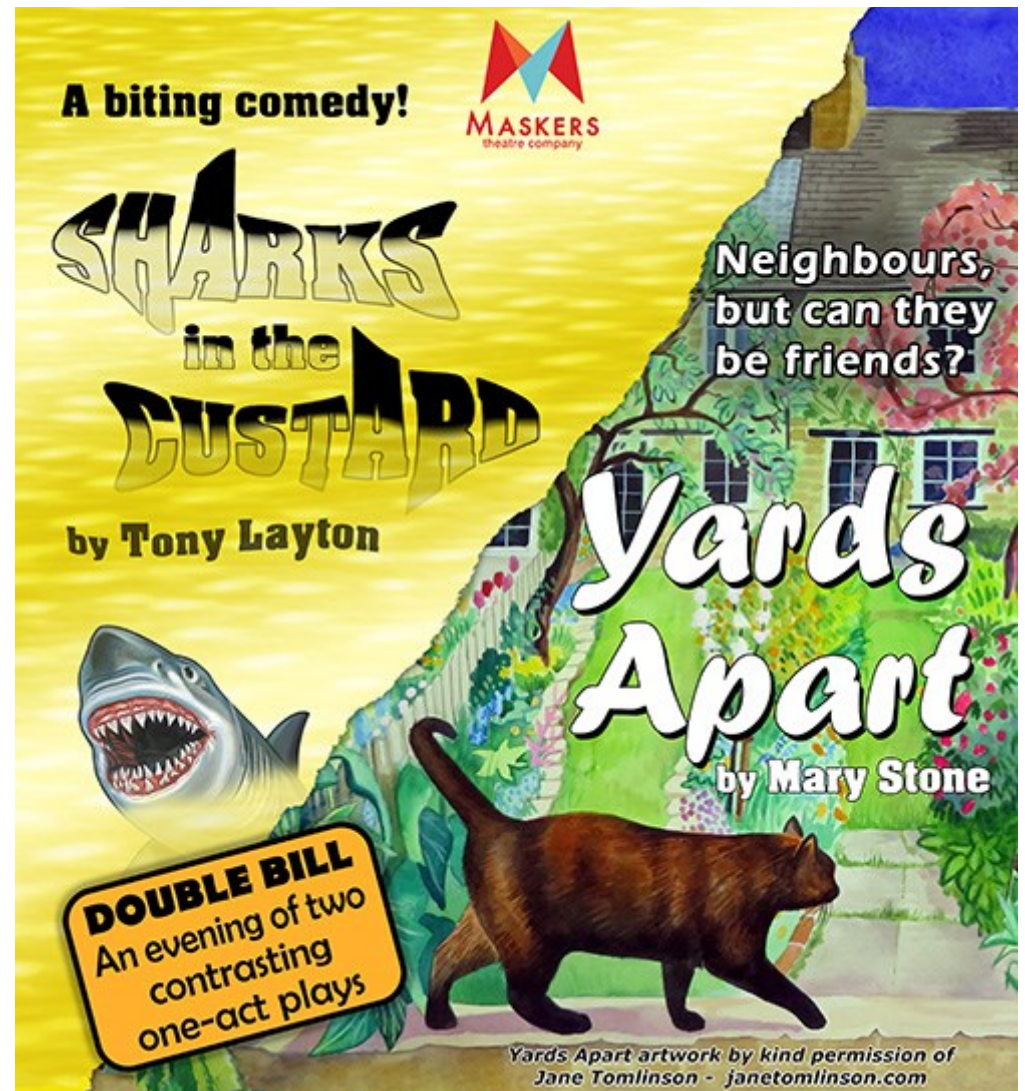
at The Maskers Studio
off Emsworth Road, Shirley,
Southampton SO15 3LX



Watch the
website for
details of our
Christmas
Production!

BOOKING: Via link on our website or 0333 666 3366
www.maskers.org.uk

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Programme

13 - 18 September 2021

MASKERS STUDIO THEATRE

Registered Charity no. 900067

maskers.org.uk

Director's Notes - Yards Apart

The journey of putting **Yards Apart** on stage has been far longer and more winding than I ever could have imagined. Little did I know back in the summer of 2019, when I asked (pretty please!) if I could write a play for Maskers, that it would be two long years before it actually happened.

When I began writing the big news was Brexit - no-one had ever heard of Coronavirus and the idea of England being in a major football final was still a fantasy. It seems like an age ago that I gave so much screen scrolling time to the furore over our departure from the EU. But it was the divide between leavers and remainers that planted the seed for this story that explores the nature of 'division'. You'll be pleased to hear that this is not a play about Brexit – phew! That was simply the inspiration. What I hope to achieve with **Yards Apart** is to look at how and why we create barriers and, more importantly, what we can do to overcome differences and find connections. And considering the fallout following the Euros - and the public attitude about our players - it seems that themes relating to nationality and belonging are as relevant now as they were two years ago.

I want to thank Maskers for giving **Yards Apart** the green light, especially when it was based on a first draft that almost completely transformed during rewrites. The support is much appreciated! Thanks also to my cast and crew for their commitment, positivity and patience as we've arranged and rearranged performance dates. And I must give a special mention to Hazel Slawson for reading drafts, giving me feedback and encouraging me to keep going. So, at last, we made it. And after many delays the world premiere of **Yards Apart** has finally arrived!

Mary



Written and Directed by Mary Stone - Mary is delighted to be presenting her one-act play, **Yards Apart**, for its *world première* at Maskers. It will be the fifth show she has directed, following: **Lemons, Lemons, Lemons, Lemons** (2019), *God of Carnage* (2016) *Colder Than Here* (2013) and the NODA award winning *Last Train to Nibroc* (2011). Mary has also directed for The Chesil Theatre's 10x10 festival, produced several shows and worked backstage in a number of roles from Stage Manager to Lighting Operator. Mary used to tread the boards too, and had roles in *Entertaining Angels*, *Kindertransport*, *Blood Wedding*, *An Inspector Calls* and *Habeas Corpus* all at The Chesil Theatre. Mary has also written comedy sketches, short plays, a short film and has had a short story published in an online anthology of horror stories!

Yards Apart will be followed by a twenty minute interval during which we will change the set ready for **Sharks in the Custard**.

For your own safety, please do not cross the barrier into the stage area.

MASKERS
theatre company

OPEN DAY

Technical demos, costume displays, behind the scenes chats & more

Shirley's own studio theatre opens its doors to everyone!

FREE ENTRY - All welcome!

Come and See Behind the Scenes

Ever wondered what goes on offstage at a play?

Every show has a host of people working away out of sight of the audience. Maskers is welcoming people into the theatre to see the bits the audience doesn't usually get to see. Come and learn a little about the workshop, the technical department, the costume department and how we go about marketing our shows.

Or just drop in for a cup of tea and a chat

Dates for Open Days 2021:

Saturday 2nd October

Saturday 6th November

Saturday 4th December

All running from 10am – 1pm.

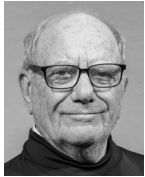
The Cast - Sharks in the Custard Continued



Guest 1 is played by **Clare Minns** - After many years performing with Southampton Operatic Society, being directed by her son is a new experience for Clare - but a very enjoyable and rewarding one.



Guest 2 is played by **Graham Buchanan** - Graham is a founder member of Maskers and is still actively involved with the company both on and backstage.



Cleaner is played by **Albie Minns** - No lines. No mistakes

The Production Team

Director (Yards Apart)
Director (Sharks in the Custard)
Production Manager and Mentor
Assistant to Mary Stone
Stage Manager
Lighting Designer
Sound Designer
Lighting and Sound Operators
Set Design, Construction, Dressing and Painting

Mary Stone
Jez Minns
Meri Mackney
Hazel Slawson
Kathryn Salmon
Clive Weeks
Jamie McCarthy
Kal Robinson, Maddie Witkowska
Clive Weeks, Jez Minns, Mary Stone,
Adam Taussik, Meri Mackney, Hazel
Slawson and Maskers members
Sheana Carrington, the casts
Meri Mackney, Adam Taussik, Jo Fox,
Clive Weeks, Ian Nichol, Mary Stone, Rob
Stone
John Hamon
Jez Minns

Costumes
Props
Photography

Sculpture
Artwork

The Cast - Yards Apart



Viki is played by **Anna Hussey** - Anna joined Maskers over 2 years ago and has been involved both on and off stage. Debuting with Maskers in *Wyrld Sisters* as part of the ensemble in 2018, Anna has contributed backstage and helped with marketing in 2019 before returning to the Maskers' stage for **100** to play Nina in October. She has had her first experience of Masker's summer open-air production, playing *Beatrice* in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Anna has been involved with local dramatic groups since 2014 and started off exclusively in costume. The acting bug grabbed her in 2016 when she performed in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as Snout the Tinker with the Curdrige Players. She has also performed with SUP in *And Then There Were None*, contributed to their war memorial performances of *For the Fallen* and played Mother in *The Railway Children*. Anna is over the moon to be cast in *Yards Apart* as it's an exciting new production and gives her the opportunity to explore and build on the character of Viki with Mary and Philip, as well as exploring themes about perceptions, beliefs and tolerance.



Mark is played by **Philip de Grouchy**- A member of the Society since the early 1970s, Philip has played a large variety of parts in every kind of show and was last seen playing Leonato in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Philip was also in our last show at the Studio, *Quartet*, just before first lockdown.



For the Maskers

Technical Manager:- Jamie McCarthy; **Lighting Consultant:-** Clive Weeks; **Sound Consultant:-** Jamie McCarthy; **Marketing Team:-** Angela Stansbridge, Peter Court, Clive Weeks, Anna Hussey, Robert Osborne, Meri Mackney, Paul Baker; **Front of House and Box Office Manager:-** Chris Baker; **Photography:-** Clive Weeks; **Bar Manager:-** Meri Mackney

Director's Notes - Sharks in the Custard

I've been umming and ahhhing about directing a show for many years and I'm really pleased that I've finally taken the plunge. I have directed before but this is my first time with the Maskers and I wanted to do a comedy for my debut, a short, simple-to-stage comedy suitable for our studio...

So, I trawled the Internet and came up with a few possibilities - and this was the best one, I thought. It's got lovely, funny dialogue, it has depth as well, the characters are nicely drawn and it's only forty minutes long - what could possibly go wrong??

I've been very lucky to have a great cast and crew to work with, who have made rehearsals a lot of fun, and I'm hugely indebted to my mentor and production manager, Meri Mackney, who has been an absolute rock and who has nudged me (and sometimes dragged me!) in the right direction.

Jez



Directed by Jez Minns - Jez is not a complete newcomer to directing. In his younger days he directed some adventurous, large-cast shows for an amateur company in Warwickshire. However, this is his first time with Maskers and he has been amazed by the professionalism and expertise of everyone involved. Normally an actor, Jez was last seen in *Much Ado About Nothing* at Townhill Park, playing Borachio, and, in the Studio, in the Maskers' Christmas show, *The Flint Street Nativity*, in which he played the seven-year-old bully-boy, Bradley Jerrams.



Acknowledgements

Our grateful thanks to:

John Hamon for the sculpture
Ian Nichol for rehearsal photographs



The Cast - Sharks in the Custard



Liz is played by **Jill Desborough** — Jill has been a Masker since 2014 and has enjoyed acting in a variety of roles. Highlights include *Much Ado About Nothing* (Townhill Park), *The Jungle Book* (Hamptworth) and *The Killing of Sister George* (Studio) and several Christmas Shows. While acting remains her first love, she has recently branched out into backstage roles, including stage managing last year's Christmas Show and directing *Quartet*.



Vera is played by **Allegra Carlton**— Allegra has played a range of character parts in numerous productions in Southampton for local amateur companies over many years. Highlights have included Rossignol in *Marat/Sade* (Nuffield Theatre), Aunt Betsy Trotwood in *David Copperfield* (Nuffield Theatre), Miss Prism in *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Nuffield Theatre) and Lady Catherine de Bourgh in *Pride and Prejudice* (Mottisfont). She has also been involved in costume design and wardrobe in a considerable number of productions for Maskers (recent shows include *Great Expectations*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Don Quixote* and *Quartet*). She is delighted to be cast in *Sharks in the Custard*, where her East Yorkshire origins are standing her in good stead.



Mair is played by **Jane Russell** — Jane is delighted to be taking part in her second production for Maskers – a completely different challenge to that of Mary in *The Flint Street Nativity* – and she has enjoyed working with fellow Maskers to bring this one act show to life. Although having performed in over 25 productions with both RAODS and EOMS since rekindling her love of acting in 2012, playing the part of Mair in *Sharks in the Custard* is the first time that Jane has had to master a Welsh accent: an interesting challenge but the perfect opportunity to binge watch Gavin and Stacey!



Bridget is played by **Kate Grundy-Garcia** - Kate has been a Masker for many years now and has more recently been in *Antigone* and *Comfort Me with Apples*, also performed at the studio. She looks forward to playing a small but compact role this time in *Sharks in the Custard*.

