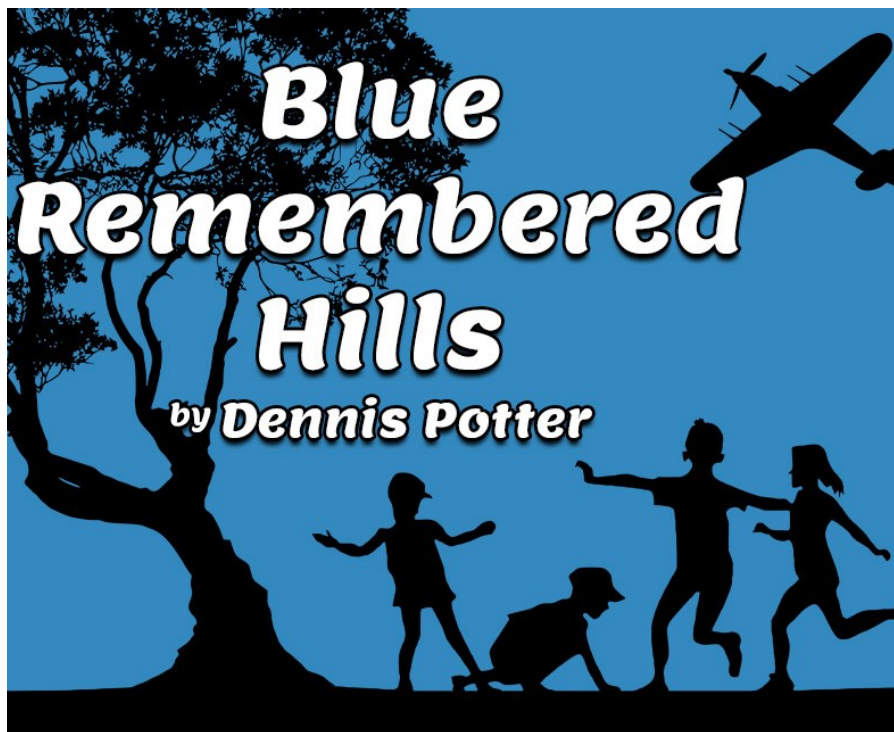


Forthcoming Production



21 — 26 October 2024

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

For the Maskers

Technical Manager:- Jamie McCarthy; **Lighting Consultant:-** Clive Weeks; **Sound Consultant:-** Jamie McCarthy;

Marketing Team:- Jenni Prior; Angela Stansbridge, Clive Weeks, Robert Osborne, Meri Mackney, Paul Baker; Rachel Di Nucci; ; **Front of House Manager:-** James Lawson; **Box Office Manager:-** Chris Baker; **Photography:-** Clive Weeks; **Bar Manager:-** Meri Mackney

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 Find us on Facebook

Registered charity no.900067



MURDER IN THE CITIZENS' JURY



What they decide will affect us all...

Programme

17th — 22nd September 2024

Maskers Studio Theatre

Registered Charity no. 900067

maskers.org.uk

Director's Notes

In May 2023, local author Denise Baden approached Maskers to see if we would be interested in holding a read-through of a new play which she'd just finished writing called *Murder in the Citizens' Jury*. We held a successful members' social evening in which we read the play, and I was very impressed with the script. At the heart of the story is the climate change message, something that really resonates with me. I think many of us would agree that we want a concerted effort to tackle the climate crisis, but as individuals we can sometimes feel powerless and unaware what solutions are out there. I was struck by the climate solutions highlighted in the play, which, it occurred to me, could not only benefit the planet, but our everyday lives too. The play also gets us thinking about a new political system and style of democracy which might better meet the needs of our changing society. Citizens' Juries (or Citizens' Assemblies) are formed of people from all walks of life who come together to have honest conversations and reach a consensus on difficult or polarising issues, particularly ones which are often skirted around by politicians constrained by electoral cycles. Currently Citizens' Juries can only put forward recommendations to governments, but perhaps it's time to think about giving more power to a model such as this.

The play has many facets and I hope that you will enjoy the whodunnit, be entertained (and at times amused) by the characters and their dramas, and also find the interactive element at the end of the play fun. We hope that you will play along!

As a new director I certainly set myself a challenge by taking on not only a brand-new play, but one which has lots of fluid transitions and unusual elements. I certainly must give special thanks to my production crew for making the creative vision a reality, especially my partner Tom, who has not only worked tirelessly on the lighting, sounds and special effects, but has also been a much-appreciated sounding board and fountain of ideas. I'm convinced he has put in even more hours on this play than I have! It's also been a privilege to have input from the playwright during the rehearsal process and we're grateful to Denise for making some further little tweaks to the script to suit our actors and setting (*Marco* was originally called *Barry* but with Ruben playing the part it was thought a Spaniard called *Barry* might be rather unbelievable!!) Thanks also to my lovely cast who have been great fun to work with and very supportive of me in my directorial debut.

We hope that you enjoy the show, perhaps learn something new, find it thought-provoking and, above all, entertaining.

Jo



Directed by Jo Fox —

Jo has been an active Masker for over 15 years and has played a variety of roles in that time, including Lady Jane Rochford in *Anne Boleyn*, Gwendolen in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Ursula in *Much Ado about Nothing* and Luna the Monkey in *The Jungle Book*. She most recently appeared as the confused newlywed wife Samantha Tuttle in Maskers' December studio production, *Sorry! Wrong Chimney!*

As well as acting, Jo has kept busy behind the scenes at Maskers and was Company Secretary on the committee from 2019 - 2023. She has also been Stage Manager, Production Manager and Props coordinator for previous productions. This show will be Jo's first foray into directing! She is excited to have the chance to bring this brand-new play to the stage for the first time and is really enjoying working with this great cast and crew.

FREE ENTRY All welcome!
Shirley's own studio theatre opens its doors to everyone!
OPEN HOUSE

Ever wondered what goes on offstage at a play?

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 on the first Saturday of every month.

Saturday 5th October

Running from 10am – 1pm.

SHINING A LIGHT ON SHIRLEY

YOUTH THEATRE CLASSES AT MASKERS theatre company

Monday, 4:30 - 6:00 (NEW)
Shirley Ensemble (12 - 18 yrs)

Wednesday
LAMDA Tuition (7+), times vary depending on grade. Enquire for details.

Friday, 4:30 - 6:30
Mixed Company (7 - 16 yrs), waiting list only

Coming Soon to the Light UP line-up:
Intro to Tech - register your interest
Junior Company (7-12 yrs) - register your interest
Musical Theatre Company (7-16yrs) - register your interest

MORE CLASSES ADDED DUE TO POPULAR DEMAND

To get more information or book a free trial visit www.lightupdrama.org.uk or email the team at info@lightupdrama.org.uk.



Playwright's Notes



My day job is Professor of Sustainability at the University of Southampton, but I'm also a writer. A character from my first novel 'Habitat Man', aka Tim the wildlife gardener, managed to sneak into this play in a tiny way. That novel was an eco-themed romcom set in Southampton and inspired by a local green garden consultant. Similarly, this play was inspired by the recent Southampton Climate Assembly. However, unlike the real version, where participants were enthused by the calm reflective atmosphere and lack of divisiveness, in the play there's lots of conflict, and of course a murder! It's been wonderful watching the actors bring my characters to life, sometimes in unexpected ways.

Denise

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to:

Board in the City CIC for the conference chairs (www.boardinthecity.co.uk)
Offix Ltd for the office furniture
AquAid for the water cooler
Southampton Scrap Store for recyclable materials

See how the audience voted each night. Results will be up on the Maskers' website after the last performance!

For all performances, the writer is offering a £10 Amazon voucher plus a free eBook for any who give feedback via an online survey within a week of seeing the performance. Visit the Maskers' website after the show for the link to complete the survey!

The Production Team

Director	Jo Fox
Production Manager	Robert Osborne
Stage Manager	Jill Desborough
Lighting Designer	Tom Foyle
Lighting Assistant	Kathryn Salmon
Sound Designers	Tom Foyle, Jo Fox
Sound Technician	Jamie McCarthy
Lighting and Sound Operators	Tom Foyle, Kathryn Salmon
Set Design	Jo Fox
Set Construction	Clive Weeks and team
Set Painting	Robert Osborne, Jo Fox
Costume	Chris Baker, Anna Hussey and Cast
Properties	Lucy Lockyer
Poster Design	Lucy Lockyer
Show Photography	Angela Stansbridge
Rehearsal Prompt	Jill Desborough
Mentor to the Director	Meri Mackney

There will be one interval of 20 minutes



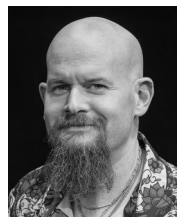
The Cast



Robert, Director of Prosecutions, played by **Philip de Grouchy** — Philip was most recently involved in *Romeo and Juliet*, *Cash on Delivery* and *Almost, Maine* as an actor and *Blithe Spirit* as director. He has been active with the Maskers and local theatre since time immemorial (nearly).



Sarah, Chair of the Citizens' Jury, played by **Emily Smith** — Emily initially studied acting at Academy of Art University before moving behind the scenes for a film degree. She has been a Masker for over a year, but has only recently returned to the stage, appearing in *Almost, Maine* in January. Being a part of *Murder in the Citizens' Jury* has been an incredible experience and she is excited to finally help present it to an audience for the very first time.



Steve, Member of the Citizens' Jury, played by **Matthew Meehan** — Matthew is a writer, actor and director with over 25 years of experience. He has appeared in plays ranging from *Oedipus* and *Antigone* to *Abigail's Party*. His own work includes the black comedies *Searching* and *Pina Colodas*. Outside of theatre his interests are Poe, Lovecraft and Motorcycles.



Jason, Member of the Citizens' Jury, played by **Daniel Chopra** — This is Daniel's third play with Maskers, having previously been in *The Three Musketeers* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Daniel has been appearing in productions with other theatres since 2015, such as *The Little Mermaid* and *Macbeth*.



Naomi, Member of the Citizens' Jury, played by **Katy de Haviland** — Having begun acting as a child in the Midlands, Katy studied Drama and Performing Arts at college before joining her local theatre company. After a 20-year break, she joined Maskers last May and has since played Elvira in *Blithe Spirit* and Susan in *Murder in the Studio*. She's excited to now be part of this brand-new production!



Marco, Member of the Citizens' Jury, played by **Ruben Sanchez-Garcia** — Ruben joined Maskers in 2010 and has since acted, directed and helped backstage in a number of shows. He has particularly fond memories of his first show with the Maskers, *Treasure Island* in 2011, as well as playing Peter in *Zoo Story* and Andrey in *Afterplay*, and directing both *Butterfly Kiss* in the Maskers Studio, and an open-air production of *Don Quixote* at Hamptworth. He's looking forward to playing Marco and thankful to Denise for accommodating his Spanish background by changing the character's name from Barry!



Devanika, Member of the Citizens' Jury, played by **Clare Britton** — Clare is new to Maskers. She did the costume design for Agatha Christie's *Murder in The Studio* recently, but this will be her first acting role with them. Theatre has been very much in her life starting with classical ballet and gaining qualifications in Theatre Makeup, Wig Making and Management. She has been a sound design technician and directed in community theatre. Some of her favourite roles include Adele in *Die Fledermaus*, Thelma in *Pack of Lies*, Conrade in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Mary in *Flint Street Nativity*, Winsome in *Bombshells* and Alison in *Searching*. Clare has enjoyed this strong character and feels privileged to get the environmental issue message out there.



Needles, Member of the Citizens' Jury, played by **Chris Baker** — Chris has been a member of the company for many years and has been involved in numerous productions both on and off stage. She can generally be found greeting the audience in our box office. She is delighted to be playing the part of Needles in this new play, and to be bringing her knitting skills to the stage.



Andrew, the Auditor, played by **Paul Baker** — Paul joined Maskers in 1996 and since then has been in over twenty-five shows in the open air for Maskers. He has played a variety of roles including Weasel Norman in *The Wind in the Willows*, Thomas Cromwell in *Anne Boleyn* and often multiple parts in the same production as evidenced when he played four different characters in *The Three Musketeers*. Paul has appeared in most of the recent productions in Maskers Studio, having played Sepulchrave in *Gormenghast* and Chris Kriegle, the Santa Burglar, in *Sorry! Wrong Chimney!*, uncle George in *Cash on Delivery* and, most recently, three different characters in *Murder in the Studio*.

News Broadcaster — **Martyn Welch**
