

OUR NEXT PRODUCTION

A story of mothers, daughters,
and the language of reconciliation

B₃ Y₁ L₁ E₁ E₁ B₃ L₁ E₁ S₁ I₁ N₁ G₂



E₁ L₁ E₁ E₁ M₃ O₁ S₁ Y₄ N₁ A₁ R₁ Y₄



2 for 1
Monday night only!

Tickets £16.50

MASKERS STUDIO THEATRE
off Emsworth Road, Shirley, SO15 3LX



Mon 27 Apr - Sat 2 May

Performances at 7:30pm

Full details and on-line booking at:
masks.org.uk

Recommended for ages 15+

Telephone booking:
0333 666 3366

This amateur production of "ELEEMOSYNARY" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd.
www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

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

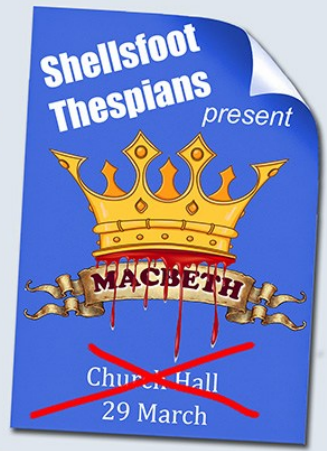
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Registered charity no.900067



Graham Holliday's

The Scottish Play



*A cursed play?
What could possibly go wrong?*

Programme
23rd — 28th March 2026
Masks Studio Theatre

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Director's Notes

As an English teacher, I taught Shakespeare's "Scottish Play" many times. It repaid multiple readings and I enjoyed the hard sell that was often necessary to engage teenagers with its language, characters and themes. I thought long and hard about how to dramatize them in the classroom and, when possible, engaged talented Theatre in Education actors to explore scenes with our students. Every time I taught it, new insights emerged. It was, therefore, with delight when, looking through the Maskers' play library for a play to direct, I came across the opening scene of **The Scottish Play**.

The protagonist, Michael, is spotlighted on one side of the stage, imagining the famous opening scene, *When shall we three meet again?* He thinks about how he would light it, about costume, setting, special effects, how he would direct the actors. Meanwhile, spotlighted on the other side of the stage, the witches plot, thunder claps, lightning flashes and creatures cry. All of this is followed by a fabulous reveal which I am certainly not going to give away here! I was engaged and excited. This was a play I wanted to direct.

But then doubts assailed me. The play was originally written as a radio play. There are sudden and frequent jumps – from Michael's mind to a rehearsal hall, to a work scene, back to Michael's mind and hence to his lounge. How was that to be staged? I was not sure I could make this work. Several things eventually convinced me.

The characters stuck in my mind. They seemed real, their problems relatable, their actions frequently flawed but very human. I believed in them. It is a play about real people and their relationships. It is about amateur theatre and its problems, about acting – themes that are close to my heart. I love the scenes where we see Michael directing his passion project and amateur actors bring Shakespeare's words alive. And I love the fact that this is a serious play that is also very funny.

Finally, I was Production Manager for **Notes from a Small Island** last year and watched as Jenni Prior and her talented team took us on a tour of the British Isles which was slick, effective and entertaining. It reminded me how skilful and creative our technical team are and how much can be achieved in our Studio. Finally, with some encouragement from Jenni, I decided to give it a go.

While directing this play has been as much of a challenge as I thought it would be, it has also been inspiring and fun. The cast have adopted their roles with gusto and, miracle of miracles, learned their lines in good time! This has enabled us to refine and develop scenes, to focus on Shakespeare's intentions in the original play and work on delivering his lines with passion and sincerity. Ash, on sound, and Tom, on lighting, have created the transformations I had in mind. Lucy and Allegra, on props and costume, have helped bring a rather bare set to life.

So, as my work on the show draws to a close, I can only hope that we have done justice to both Scottish Plays and that you have a fabulous evening!

Jill



Directed by Jill Desborough — Since joining Maskers in 2014, Jill has been involved in many shows both on and off stage, appearing most recently in our Christmas Show, **Merry Maskerade** and our touring production of **Northanger Abbey**. Her directing debut, just before lockdown in February 2020, was **Quartet**, a play she loved, with a cast of 4 - all brilliant actors. This time, directing another play she loves, for rather different reasons, she has 13 brilliant actors to deploy. Exciting times!

Upcoming Production

From the works of P.G. Wodehouse
Jeeves & Wooster
in
'PERFECT NONSENSE'
by The Goodale Brothers
Fri 29 May - Sat 6 June
Doors open at 7pm, Performances at 7:30pm
Poor Bertie Wooster! In the soup again. Jeeves to the rescue!

LIGHT UP - SHIRLEY
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VALUE FOR MONEY ENGAGING LOCAL DRAMA CLASSES RUN BY HAMPSHIRE'S MOST INNOVATIVE YOUTH THEATRE AND PERFORMING ARTS CHARITY

WEDNESDAY (TERA TIME) - ADVANCED (11-19)
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THURSDAY (TERA TIME) - MUSICAL THEATRE COMPANY (7-18)
5:00 - 7:00

FRIDAY (TERA TIME) - COMPANY (7-18)
4:30 - 6:30

SATURDAY (TERA TIME) - IMPROV CLUB (10+)
1:30 - 3:00 (monthly)

Scan above or email
info@lightupdrama.org.uk to learn more or book a trial.

DOING YOUTH THEATRE DIFFERENTLY
REG. CHARITY: 117471

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

Next session
Saturday 4th April
10am – 1pm.

The Production Team

Director	Jill Desborough
Production Manager	Maria McKay
Stage Manager	Robert Osborne
Lighting Design	Tom Fox
Sound Design	Ashley Martin
Lighting and Sound Operators	Emma Loughnane, Daniel Dick
Set Design	Clive Weeks, Jill Desborough
Set Construction	Tuesday Team
Set Dressing	Lucy Lockyer
Costume	Allegra Carlton, Meri Mackney, Angela Stansbridge
Properties	Lucy Lockyer, Joe Lockyer
Poster Design	Clive Weeks
Show Photography	Donald Coe, Clive Weeks, Jenni Prior
Rehearsal Prompt	Philip de Grouchy

Acknowledgements

Maskers are grateful to:

Bitterne Historical Society for the typewriter

Field Palmer Estate Agents for house details samples

Zoey Mackney for the loan of a table



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; Tash Priddle; Maddy Cope; **Front of House Manager:-** James Lawson; **Box Office Manager:-** Chris Baker; **Photographers:-** Clive Weeks, Donald Coe, Ian Wilson; **Bar Manager:-** Meri Mackney
Tuesday Set-Building Team:- Clive Weeks, Brian Stansbridge, Martin Caveney, Martyn Welch, William Baggs, with help from other Maskers

The Cast



Michael played by Neil Forster — Neil joined Maskers in 2021 and has since made appearances in several shows including *Romeo & Juliet*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Notes from a Small Island* and *Almost, Maine*. Most recently he could be seen as the tormented Eben Cabot in last year's production of *Desire Under the Elms*. A native Geordie (ish), Neil grew up in South Shields and has been moving further and further south since he left school. Next stop: Isle of Wight!



Lynne played by Emma Kirkpatrick — Emma has had a keen interest in performing since she was very young. She was part of an amateur dramatic theatre group when she lived in Devon during her teenage years and then went on to gain a degree in Drama and Theatre Studies at Aberystwyth University. After Emma moved to Southampton, she joined Maskers in 2021 and made her debut performance in *Out of Focus*. Since then she has appeared in *The Three Musketeers*, *Cash on Delivery*, *Blue Remembered Hills* and *Desire Under the Elms*.



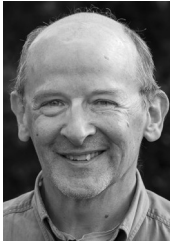
Frank played by Chris Gath — Chris is very excited to be a part of *The Scottish Play*; and as he is quite a new member to Maskers, this is his first production with the company. Chris would like to give his heartfelt thanks to everyone for being so welcoming. Chris attended Chichester University studying music, dabbling in musical theatre while there. However, this is Chris' first time on stage in over a decade, so he really hopes to do everyone proud.



Geraldine played by Meri Mackney — Meri has been a Masker for many years and has acted, directed and performed just about every backstage role during that time. After devising and directing the Christmas Show 2024, *Winter Sparkles*, she was seen onstage in last year's *Notes from a Small Island*, playing a mix of ten different characters. Following that she was Production Manager and Stage Manager for the tour of *Northanger Abbey* and Production Manager for *Desire Under the Elms*, as well as mentoring several new-to-Maskers Directors. When not otherwise involved in a production (and often when she is!), she can be found behind the bar. She likes to keep busy!

There will be one interval of 20 minutes

The Cast



Alan played by **Paul Baker** — Paul joined Maskers in 1996. Since then he has played a variety of roles including Weasel Norman in *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 many of the recent productions in Maskers Studio, having played Sepulchra in *Gormenghast*, Chris Kriegle, the Santa Burglar in *Sorry, Wrong Chimney!*, Uncle George in *Cash on Delivery*, three different characters in *Murder in the Studio*, Andrew in *Murder in the Citizens' Jury* and Willie in *Blue Remembered Hills*. Like his character in this play, his late father was also called Alan and, indeed, did help Maskers with set building.



Sally played by **Carey Downer** — This is Carey's first production with Maskers, but she has experience in radio, theatre and music and is a founder member of Break-a-Leg, an English theatre association based in Paris, producing comedies by writers such as Willy Russell, Noel Coward and Oscar Wilde. She enjoys performing and writing comic sketches. She is also a voice-over artist and a trained Shiatsu practitioner. Since 2023, Carey has performed in four SUP productions and is excited to be joining Maskers for *The Scottish Play*.



Fiona played by **Kate de Haviland** — After acting in the Midlands as a child, Kate studied Drama and Performing Arts at college before joining her local theatre company. After a 20-year break, she joined Maskers in 2020 and has since been in various shows including: *Blithe Spirit*, *Murder in the Studio*, *Murder in the Citizens' Jury*, *Winter Sparkles*, and last year's *Northanger Abbey* touring show. She's excited to be back in the studio this year for *The Scottish Play*.



Mary played by **Angela Raistrick** — This is Angela's second production with Maskers having made her debut with them in *Merry Maskerade* in December. She studied Performing Arts at college and has been performing from a young age, dancing for the first time as a sugarplum in *The Nutcracker* at the age of 3 and being involved in junior performances at the Nuffield Theatre.

The Cast



Barnaby played by **Matthew Grant** — Matthew has performed in many different theatre shows since the age of 14, mainly in musicals and pantomimes, and, at 29, joined Maskers for the touring production of *Northanger Abbey* last summer as the ardent young gentleman-about-town, James Morland. He is enjoying showing his versatility, playing a very different character in *The Scottish Play*. He hopes you thoroughly enjoy the show.



Les Dye played by **Bandy Smith** — Bandy started on stage accidentally. He was helping out backstage with a pantomime and somehow ended up as the lead character! After doing a couple more, he found Maskers and started his journey with us playing Bob Cratchit in *Christmas with the Cratchits!* Since then, he has played a hypnotised policeman in *Sorry, Wrong Chimney!* and an angel in *Winter Sparkles*. He's also been a prompt at rehearsals, and he is sometimes a bartender in our bar, as well as running his barber shop in Shirley.



Jackie played by **Angela Stansbridge** — Angie has been an active member of Maskers since 1973 and has enjoyed playing a wide variety of parts including in *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Out of Focus*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Twelfth Night*, *Ten Times Table*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Don Quixote*, *Treasure Island* and *Romeo and Juliet*, for which she was also Production Manager. Angie also regularly works on the set dressing for the studio plays and, as a member of the Marketing Team, she is rarely seen without a bundle of flyers in her hand promoting our shows!!



Daisy played by **Sue Dashper** — During Sue's time in Maskers, she has been involved in a variety of productions including: *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Out of Focus*, *Contractions*, *Metamorphosis* and *Merry Maskerade* in the Studio and *Sitting Pretty* and *An Italian Straw Hat* at the Nuffield Theatre. Sue has appeared in many open-air productions including: *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Don Quixote*, *Around the World in Eighty Days*, *The Jungle Book*, *Anne Boleyn*, *Treasure Island*, *Twelfth Night* and *Jane Eyre* and in the tour of *Northanger Abbey*.



Erica played by **Jo Iacovou** — Joanna has been a member of Maskers since 2003. The roles she has played have been many and varied, ranging from Ruby Birtle in *When we are Married*, Greta in *Metamorphosis*, Childie in *The Killing of Sister George*, Sophie in *100*, Rita in *Educating Rita*, Verges in *Much Ado about Nothing* and playing multiple parts in *Around the World in 80 Days* and *Jane Eyre*. Jo branched out into directing with *Our Town* for which she won Best Director of a Drama in the Curtain Call Awards.