



Leeds
Arts
Centre
at the
Civic
Theatre

28 January to 1 February 1997



by Timberlake Wertenbaker

Background to the play

A group of 10 actors first performed *Our Country's Good* at the Royal Court Theatre, in tandem with a production of *The Recruiting Officer*, in 1988. Their constraints were financial - hence the small cast and the extensive doubling of parts in each production. Wertenbaker herself makes a joke of this in her play. The amateur theatre has constraints of course but we don't have to pay our actors, so we can use as many as we like - or as many as we can get! Typically in amateur theatre, there are more women wanting to act than there are parts available. Thus it is that I have not extensively "doubled" the men as in the original production; yet, like the original production, several of the women convicts become officers of the first Australian penal colony.

Timberlake Wertenbaker based her play on Thomas Keneally's novel *The Playmaker*, which is itself based on historical fact. The recruiting officer was performed, as a celebration of the birthday of George III on Thursday 4th June 1789 by the convicts of the Penal Settlement, Sydney Cove. The colony had been established after a horrific 8 month voyage the year before. Most lags had been sentenced to 7 years transportation, including:

Robert Sideway	for stealing property worth 28/=.
James (Ketch) Freeman	highway attack and theft of 12/=.
John Wishammer	stealing snuff.
John Arscott	burglary of watches and tobacco.
Mary Brenham	not yet 14 at sentencing; cloth and clothes value 39/=.
Duckling Smith	(supposed name Ann) sentenced to death, age 16; 40/= silverware.
Dabby (Mary) Bryant	sentenced to be hanged for highway robbery/assault on a woman of a silk bonnet, 12d and other goods value 11/= . Reprieved.
Nancy Turner	(Liz Morden) clothing valued 40/= . In Australia sentenced to hang for perjury.

The Authorities, too are well documented. Davey Collins, Watkin Tench, as well as Ralph Clark, all kept journals. In his, Ralph writes much of his wishes to be promoted, but especially of his nightmares and of his concerns about his wife, Betsey-Alicia, in England. Late in 1791, when he was sent back to England, he had to leave behind his lag wife, Mary, and their child, Alicia. Dabby fulfilled her wish to return to Devon. After an amazing voyage to the Dutch East Indies in a stolen fishing boat and recapture in Batavia, she was eventually shipped back to Newgate. There the famous journal-writer James Boswell began a drive for her release. He settled £10 a year on her before seeing her aboard a ship on the Thames which took her back to her family in Fowey.

Finally, it is interesting to note that Keneally dedicates his novel to Governor Phillip's "adopted" aboriginal... "Arabanoo and his brethren, still dispossessed."

Gwyneth Hadley

Our Country's Good

by Timberlake Wertenbaker

Cast

Captain Arthur Phillip, RN <i>(Governor-in-Chief of New South Wales)</i>	<i>Malcolm Brown</i>
Major Robbie Ross, RM	<i>Ben Caswell</i>
Captain David Collins, RM <i>(Advocate General)</i>	<i>Gordon Wilson</i>
Captain Watkin Tench, RM	<i>Jonathan Coope</i>
Captain Jemmy Campbell, RM	<i>Laurie Toczek</i>
Rev Johnson	<i>Pam Wilson</i>
Lieutenant George Johnston, RM	<i>Marie Lindley</i>
Lieutenant Will Dawes, RM	<i>Shirley Broadbent</i>
Lieutenant Ralph Clark, RM	<i>Michael Brooksbank</i>
Lieutenant William Faddy, RM	<i>Monica Brown</i>
Midshipman Harry Brewer, RN <i>(Provost Marshall)</i>	<i>Martin Key</i>
An Aboriginal Australian	<i>Ashoak Lakhaney</i>
John Arscott	<i>Jonathan Coope</i>
Ketch Freeman	<i>Edwin Barraclough</i>
Robert Sideway	<i>Dave Mallinson</i>
John Wisehammer	<i>Richard Francis</i>
Mary Brenham	<i>Caroline Rake</i>
Dabby Bryant	<i>Margaret Savage</i>
Liz Morden	<i>Kathryn Francis</i>
Duckling Smith	<i>Annalie Wilson</i>
Meg Long	<i>Monica Brown</i>
Black Caesar	<i>Ashoak Lakhaney</i>

Production Team

Stage Manager	<i>Martyn Drake</i>
Assistant Stage Manager	<i>Joyce King</i>
Properties	<i>Mary Nelson, Doreen Parker and Marie Lindley</i>
Prompt	<i>Christine Wilson</i>
Set and Lighting Design	<i>Malcolm Brown</i>
Wardrobe	<i>George Judd, Maggie Rhodes and team</i>
Wigs	<i>Jean Blundell</i>
Sound Recording	<i>Jim Marshall</i>
Lighting	<i>Peter Waddicor</i>
Sound	<i>Denise Forton</i>
Front of House Manager	<i>Shirley Durham</i>

Director *Gwyneth Hadley*

The play takes place in Sydney, Australia in 1788/9

Act One

One	The Voyage Out
Two	A Lone Aboriginal Australian Describes the Arrival of the First Convict Fleet in Botany Bay on 20th January 1788
Three	Punishment
Four	The Loneliness of Men
Five	An Audition
Six	The Authorities Discuss the Merits of the Theatre
Seven	Harry and Duckling go Rowing
Eight	The Women Learn Their Lines
Nine	Ralph Clark Tries to Kiss His Dear Wife's Picture
Ten	John Wisehammer and Mary Brenham Exchange Words
Eleven	The First Rehearsal

Act Two

One	Visiting Hours
Two	His Excellency Exhorts Ralph
Three	Harry Brewer Sees the Dead
Four	The Aborigine Muses on the Nature of Dreams
Five	The Second Rehearsal
Six	The Science of Hanging
Seven	The meaning of Plays
Eight	Duckling Makes Vows
Nine	A Love Scene
Ten	The Question of Liz
Eleven	Backstage

Civic Theatre

Theatre Manager - *Steven Cartwright*
Assistant Manager - *Vivien Simpson*
Chief Technician and Lighting - *Peter Waddicor*
Technicians - *Sandy Clark, Chas Elliott*
Catering for Crown Point Foods - *Shirley Tarran*
Box Office - *Helen Richmond, Shirley Shortall, Sylvia Gooding*

In accordance with the requirements of the Licensing Sub-Committee of Leeds City Council:

- The public may leave at the end of the performance by all exits and entrance doors and such doors must at that time be open.
- All gangways, passages and staircases must be kept entirely free from chairs or any other obstructions.
- Persons shall not be permitted to stand in any of the intersecting gangways, or stand in any other unseated space in the auditorium, unless standing in such a space has been specially allowed by the Licensing Committee. A notice is exhibited in that part of the auditorium in which standing has been sanctioned.
- The safety curtain must be lowered and raised once immediately before the commencement of each performance to show that it is in proper working order.

Leeds Arts Centre

Leeds Arts Centre was formed in 1945 as an amateur society. Our members come from all walks of life and include some who have worked in the theatre and others who hope to make a career on the stage. We are a friendly company who work together to maintain the high standards for which our productions are well known and enjoy ourselves very much in the process.

Each year we produce four plays here at the Civic Theatre and for the past two years have entered the 'Walk the Plank' play festival in Wakefield where we met local playwright Mark Wood. It is his brand new comedy *Glasshouse* that we are going to premiere in April this year.

Our Green Room Group is very active with plays, readings and other forms of entertainment in the rehearsal rooms, giving members who are not in the current theatre production the opportunity to develop their acting or directing abilities and entertain the rest of us.

Our Fine Arts Group meets regularly throughout the year for life drawing, sketching and painting.

Last, but not least, we enjoy a variety of social activities including theatre visits, outings, parties etc.

We are looking for new members...

...so if you are interested in any of the following:

**acting, directing, producing, set building
painting (scenery or pictures)
making and repairing costumes
helping back stage, front of house
or even with publicity**

...why not have a chat with one of our members front of house this evening or in the bar after the show. Or write with contact telephone number for further information to:

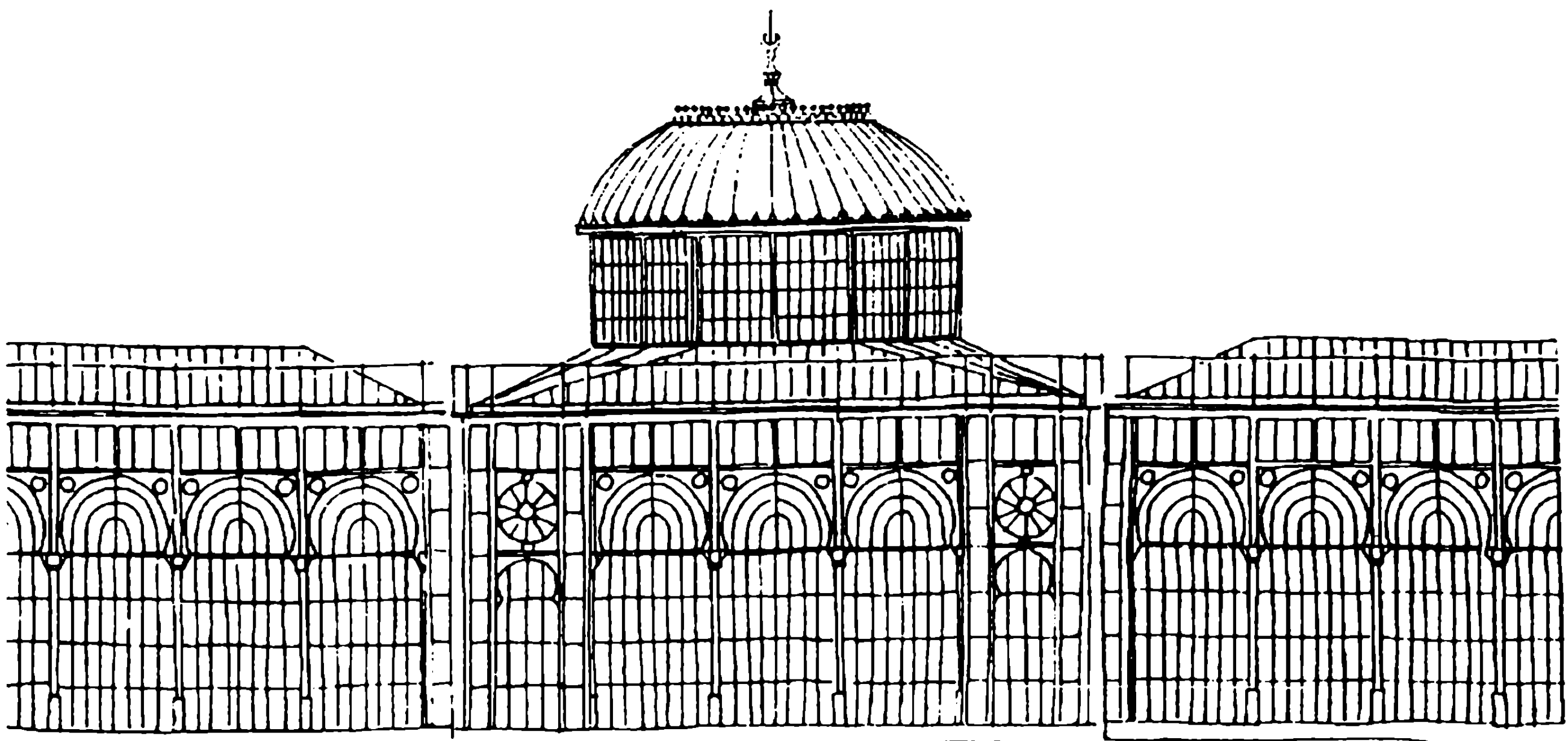
**The Secretary, Leeds Arts Centre
c/o Civic Theatre, Cookridge Street, Leeds LS2 8BH**

Costume Hire

Costumes of various types and period can be hired at reasonable rates from the Leeds Arts Centre costume collection by drama societies or by individuals for fancy dress occasions. Please telephone Mrs Margaret Rhodes, our wardrobe mistress, to discuss your requirements **Leeds (0113) 275 6796**

Leeds Arts Centre Presents
Premiere of New Comedy
by Mark Wood

Glasshouse



Set in a modernised shopping centre, with two clowns, a soldier, a grasping merchant and a restaurateur who can't pay her bills this new comedy from the pen of West Yorkshire playwright Mark Wood gallops to a riotous conclusion.

22nd to 26th April 1997

Noel Coward's

Relative Values

Directed by Betty Triggs from 17th to 21st June 1997

Next Guild Production:
Leeds Youth Opera in **Martha**
12th to 15th February 1997

Friends of Leeds Civic Theatre
Please join the friends and
support this theatre
Application forms available from the foyer