

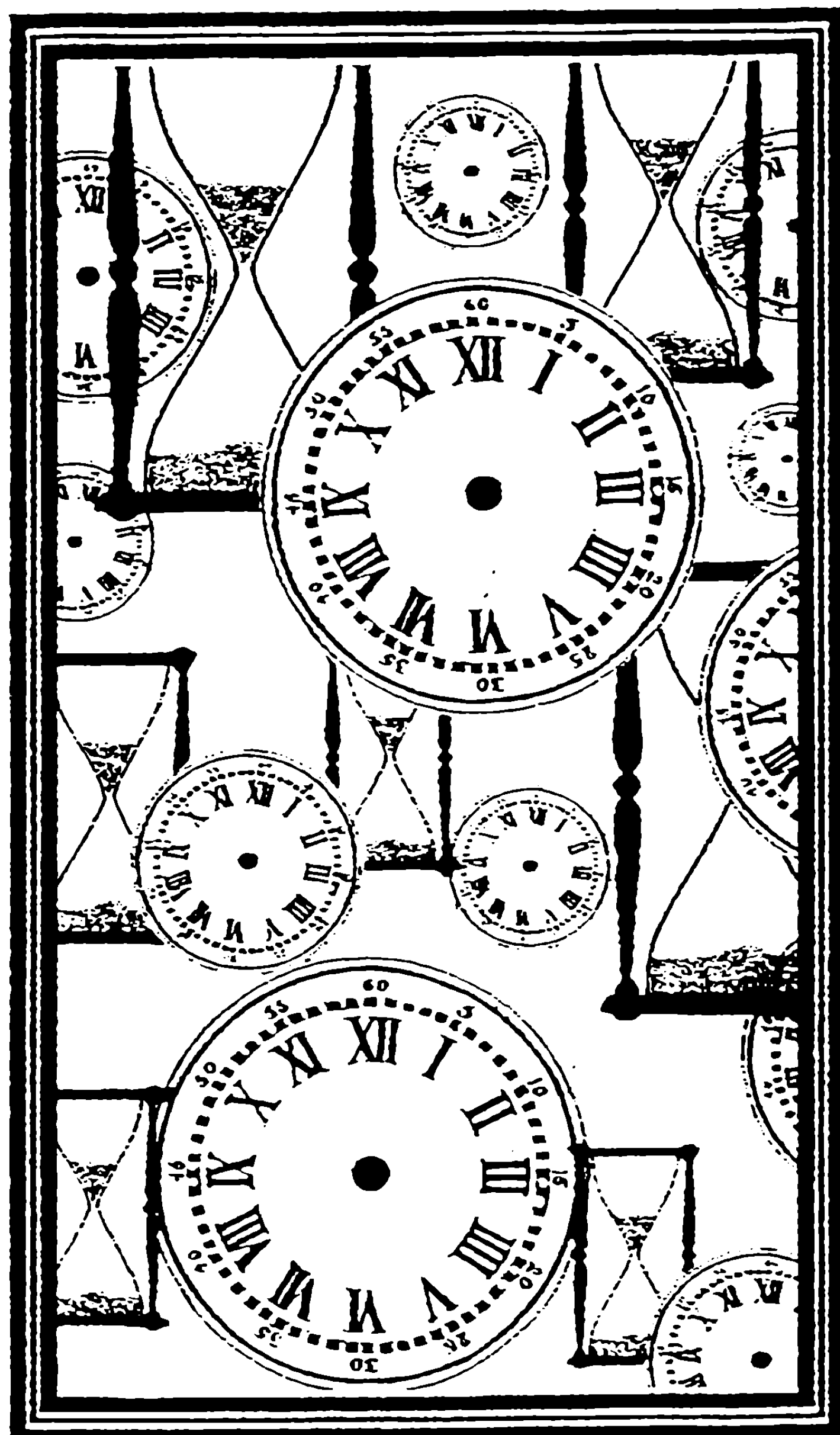
Leeds Arts Centre

presents

The Picture of Dorian Gray

by Oscar Wilde

adapted by Malcolm Brown



Leeds Civic Theatre

17th to 20th October, 2001

The Picture of Dorian Gray

Oscar Wilde's only novel, 'The Picture of Dorian Gray', was first published in 1891, but it still continues to fascinate us with its depiction of one of society's overwhelming obsessions - the cult of youthful beauty. It was originally condemned as 'a poisonous book, the atmosphere of which is heavy with the mephitic odours of moral and spiritual putrefaction' and 'a tale spawned from the leprous literature of the French decadents'.

Wilde deliberately offended the Puritans in his preface to the novel by asserting: 'There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all.' He went on to claim that 'It is the spectator, and not life that art really mirrors' and stated that a central point of the book was that 'Each man sees his own sin in Dorian Gray'.

Critics identified Wilde with Lord Henry Wotton, the young aristocrat whose cold charm and epigrammatic dialogue mask his heartless disregard for the damage he does to others. Wilde himself identified far more with Basil Hallward, the artist whose obsession with Dorian Gray leads to his own death, and seems to prefigure Wilde's obsession with Lord Alfred Douglas, which ultimately led to his trial, imprisonment, bankruptcy and exile.

The moralizers who condemned the work confused the portrayal of evil with an exhortation to evil. Lord Henry's arguments are sophistries which are clever but unsound and even contradictory. Basil Hallward cannot control the events he sets in motion by painting the portrait, and Dorian himself is increasingly terrified by his descent into corruption and crime. Unable to drown his fears in sex or drugs, he tries to defeat his conscience by destroying the picture which has become its visible symbol, and pays a terrible price.

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell:
And after many days my Soul return'd
And said, 'Behold, Myself am Heav'n and Hell'

The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám

Cast

Lord Henry Wotton	Dave Wallinson
Basil Hallward, an artist	Adam Booth
Dorian Gray	Chris Hudson
Lord Fermor, Lord Henry's uncle	Edwin Barraclough
Lady Agatha, Lord Henry's aunt	Margaret Savage
The Duchess of Harley	Monica Brown
Sibyl Vane, an actress	Angela Sparks
Mrs Vane, Sibyl's mother	Gwyneth Hadley
James Vane, Sibyl's brother	Jan Major
Alan Campbell	Martin Key
Lady Harborough	Joyce King
First Woman	Maureen Gokhale
Second Woman	Anne-Claude McDermid
The Duchess of Monmouth	Kathryn Francis

Designed and directed by Malcolm Brown

Crew

Production Co-ordinator	Pam Wilson
Stage Manager and Set construction	Martyn Drake
Props	Doreen Parker, Denise Davies and Pam Wilson
Prompt	Joyce King and Monica Brown
Costume Co-ordinator	Jean Blundell
Lighting	Peter Waddicor
Sound Recording	Jim Marshall
Sound Operation	Pat Foster
Front of House Manager	Betty Triggs
Box Office	Maggie Rhodes

Act One - London, 1895

Interval of fifteen minutes

Act Two - London and Selby, 1913

We can forgive a man for making a useful thing as long as he does not admire it. The only excuse for making a useless thing is that one admires it intensely.

All art is quite useless.

Oscar Wilde - Preface to The Picture of Dorian Gray

Oscar Wilde

Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde was born in Dublin on 15th October, 1854 and lived there until 1874 when he went to Magdalen College, Oxford. There he attracted often outraged attention to himself by his flamboyant dress and behaviour.

In 1879 he moved to London and published his Poems. In 1882 he embarked on a long and successful lecture tour of the USA and Canada, and in 1884 he married Constance Lloyd and settled in Chelsea. His two sons were born in the following two years. He published a series of tales and articles in various magazines, and in 1891 'The Picture of Dorian Gray' was first published in book form.

His greatest works, including the plays, were published over the next few years, culminating in 'The Importance of Being Earnest' in 1895. In the same year he was insulted by the Marquess of Queensbury as a result of his relationship with Queensbury's son, Lord Alfred Douglas, and he charged the Marquess with criminal libel. Queensbury was acquitted and Wilde himself was arrested for 'acts of gross indecency with other male persons'. He was found guilty and sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour.

While in prison he was declared bankrupt. On his release he went abroad and joined Lord Alfred Douglas in Italy. By 1898 he was in Paris where he wrote 'The Ballad of Reading Gaol' which drew on his own experiences in prison. In 1900 he visited Rome, and during a serious illness he was baptised a Roman Catholic. He died from cerebral meningitis on 30th November in the same year.

Civic Theatre

Theatre Manager	Steven Cartwright
Assistant Manager	Vivien Simpson
Chief Technician & Lighting	Peter Waddicor
Technicians	Sandy Clark & David Simpson
Catering (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:

- (a) The public may leave at the end of the performance by all exits and entrance doors and such doors must at all times be open
- (b) All gangways passages and staircases must be kept entirely free from chairs or any other obstruction.
- (c) 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 space has been specially allowed by the Licensing Sub-Committee. A notice is exhibited in that part of the auditorium in which standing has been sanctioned.
- (d) 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.

Forthcoming Productions

Thurs 7th – Sat 9th February 2002 7.30pm
Saturday Matinee 3.00pm

Seasons Greetings

By Alan Ayckbourn
Directed by Margaret Davey

Wed 17th April – Sat 20th April 2002

An Inspector Calls

By J B Priestley
Directed by Joyce King

W/c 10th June 2002

The Taming of the Shrew

By William Shakespeare
Directed by
Marie Lindley and Chris Hudson

The next Guild production at The Civic Theatre

Starlights

Presented by Showstoppers
23 – 27 October 2001 7.30pm

Friends of the Civic Theatre

If you would like to support this theatre – why not join the Friends
Application forms available in the foyer



LEEDS ARTS CENTRE

Leeds Arts Centre was formed in 1945 as an amateur society. Our members come from all walks of life and include people who have worked in the theatre, others who hope to make a career on the stage and quite a number who are very happy to remain amateurs. We're a friendly company, working together to maintain the high standards for which our productions are known. First and foremost we aim to enjoy ourselves.

Each year we produce plays at the Civic Theatre – but that's not all...

Our **Green Room** group devises plays, readings, quizzes and other entertainments to keep members not involved in current productions busy and to develop our skills in acting, directing and production.

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

We welcome new members...

... so if you're interested in:

acting, directing, producing, set building & painting, making and repairing costumes back stage and front of house or publicity and promotion

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

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