



LEEDS ARTS
CENTRE

the WEIR

By Conor McPherson

Directed by Ken Taylor

Wednesday 1 - Saturday 4 February 2017

The Carriageworks Theatre





Leeds Arts Centre is a prestigious amateur theatre group founded in 1945, and member of the Leeds Civic Arts Guild.

We are a friendly society, working together to maintain the high standards for which our productions are known. We produce four plays each year at the Carriageworks Theatre, as well as organising workshops to help members to develop their acting, directing and production skills.

We offer opportunities to all who are interested in becoming involved with any aspect of theatre.

New members are always welcome!

If you are interested in acting, directing, designing or making scenery or costumes, stage management, props, sound, publicity or front of house then please speak to a member of our friendly team.

You can also contact us by email at publicity@leedsartscentre.org.uk or in writing to The Secretary, Leeds Arts Centre, c/o Carriageworks Theatre, Millennium Square, Leeds LS2 3AD

To find out more why not visit our website www.leedsartcentre.org.uk where you can complete an application form in the 'Join Us' section.



Welcome to Leeds Arts Centre's production of The Weir

It is always a privilege for a director to work with a piece of drama such as 'The Weir'. In essence, the play achieves resolution through the use of dialogue rather than action, and McPherson's use of dialogue and idiom is, in my opinion, unsurpassed.

For me, the play is about change, symbolised by the bringing to the area of electricity by the local ESB weir. Electricity brought light where there was only darkness. Provoked by the arrival of newcomer Valerie, conversation in the pub evolves into the telling of stories about the local folklore. Change is interwoven into the stories that the characters tell, of strange happenings in the area and of people now gone. Within the stories are clues to changes that have affected the characters themselves. The blustering Finbar reveals his sense of loss and isolation after the death of his father. The taciturn Jim speaks of an event that severely affected him as a young man, and Jack tells of a mistake that led to a life of loneliness. As for Valerie, she finds a sense of resurrection and hope in their stories, after an overwhelming tragedy. There is no doubt that after the arrival of Valerie, life is not going to be the same again. The play has brilliantly drawn characters, and is full of humour, pathos, humanity and optimism.

My thanks go out to my skilful and dedicated actors, and the selfless, unseen team of creatives who have worked hard to produce a set and performances worthy of the play.

I'm very glad that you came, and I hope that you will be too.

Kind regards

Ken



Leeds Arts Centre

Leeds Arts Centre is a registered charity and non-profit making organisation. We are currently looking for companies and organisations that would benefit from advertising in our programmes or sponsoring our productions.

To find out more email us at publicity@leedsartscentre.org.uk, or contact The Publicity Officer, Leeds Arts Centre, c/o Carriageworks Theatre, Millennium Square, Leeds LS2 3AD and Visit www.leedsartscentre.org.uk to see an archive of previous productions.

Leeds Arts Centre has a wide range of high quality men's and women's costumes available to hire at competitive rates.

These include:

- Period costumes
- Character costumes
- Evening dress
- Military uniforms
- Suits
- Accessories

For more information, please see our website at <http://www.leedsartscentre.org.uk/costume-hire>



The Leeds Civic Arts Guild

The Leeds Civic Arts Guild is the 'umbrella' association of various dramatic, musical, operatic and arts societies that are based in the centre of Leeds at the Carriageworks Theatre. Each group has its own identity, however they all come together as part of the Guild, working with Leeds City Council and the Carriageworks. The member societies are:-

Cosmopolitan Players - Leeds Amateur Operatic Society (LAOS) -
Leeds Arts Centre - Leeds Children's Theatre - Leeds Gilbert and
Sullivan Society - LIDOS - Leeds Writers Circle - Leeds Youth Opera -
Morley Amateur Operatic Society - St Mary's Youth Theatre -
Shatterproof - STARS – Northern Youth Theatre Company

For more information visit www.lcag.org.uk



Upcoming Leeds Civic Arts Guild productions at the Carriageworks Theatre

Leeds Youth Opera

Les Misérables – School Edition

Wednesday 8th to Sunday 12th February 2017

Leeds Gilbert & Sullivan Society

Kiss Me Kate

Tuesday 21st to Saturday 25th March 2017

Cosmopolitan Players

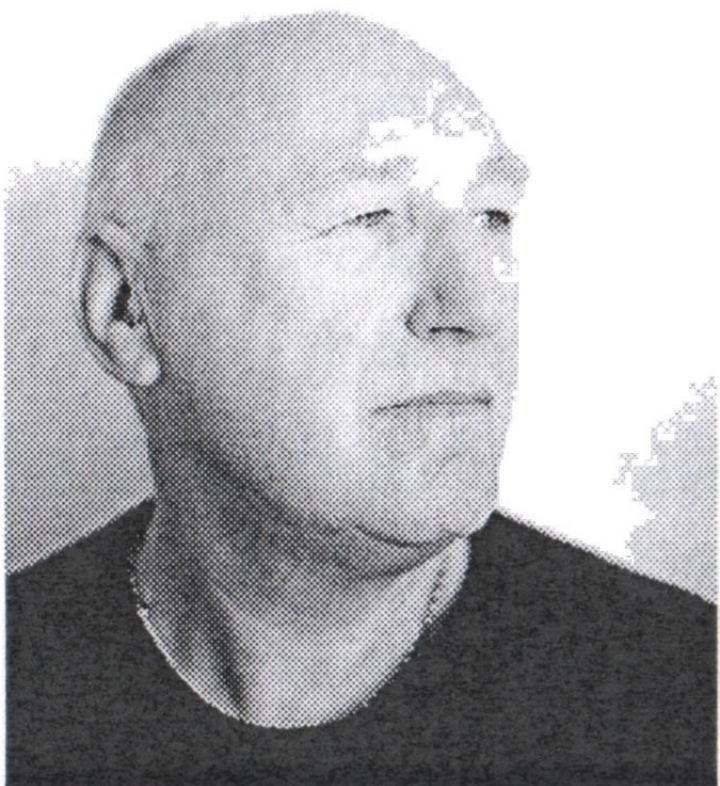
Sandcastles

Thursday 25th to Saturday 27th May 2017



Biographies

Ken Taylor – Director



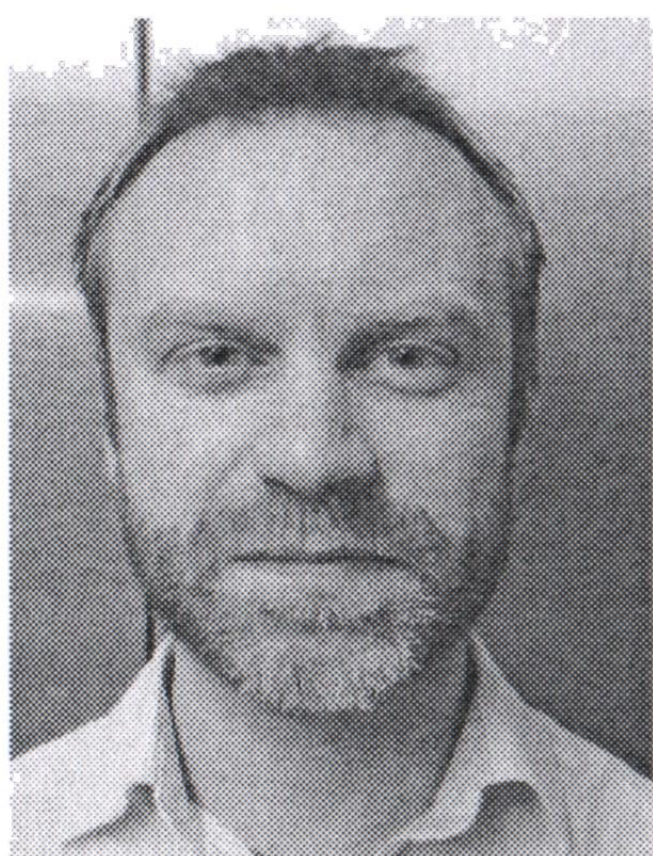
Ken is a very experienced actor and director, and has been with LAC since 2012. He has acted on stage and on film, and in 2016 directed a team of actors from LAC in an RSC production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Alhambra in Bradford, and at the RST in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Graham Greensit – Jack



Graham has been involved with LAC since 2005. Previous acting roles with the LAC include Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, all male roles in *Two*, Larry in *Closer*, Skin Lad in *Road*, Robert in *Betrayal* and George in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* for which he was awarded Leeds Civic Arts Guild Best Actor 2012.

Dean Franklin – Finbar

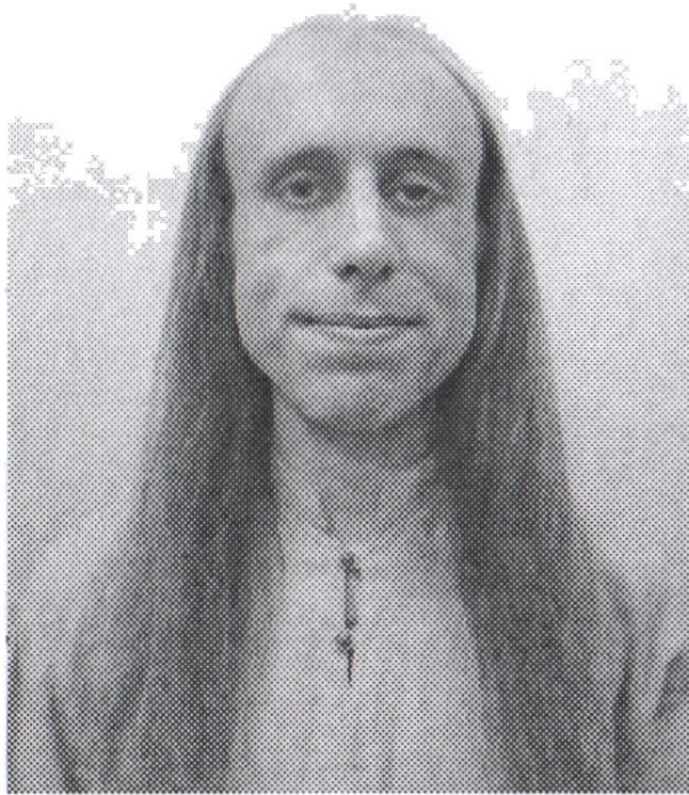


Dean has played leading roles in a number of theatre productions over the last 5 years, including two with LAC – Stanley Webber in *The Birthday Party* and Elwood P Dowd in *Harvey*. The summer of 2018 will see Dean's directorial debut with LAC when he will direct the classic farce *Charley's Aunt*.



Biographies

Alan Buttery – Jim



Alan is originally from Telford, Shropshire and has been a member of LAC since 2012. Alan directed Mary Chase's *Harvey* in February 2016 and has had acting roles in *The Visit*, *Dry Rot* (both 2013), *Kindertransport* (2015) and *Macbeth* (2016). He is also a member of Leeds Children's Theatre, and appeared in their productions of *The Railway Children* and *The Amazing Maurice and His Educated Rodents*.

Joe Caunce – Brendan



Joe is a new member of LAC, having only moved to Leeds recently. Joe has previously acted with 'The New Theatre' in his time at the University of Nottingham, where he studied History. The majority of plays Joe has previously featured in have been comedy productions."

Ayshea Megyery – Valerie



Ayshea joined LAC in 2014 since then she has been an emotive and dynamic performer in both leading and supporting roles. She is an actress, guitarist, singer, song writer, barrister, lecturer and mother.



Notes on The Weir

The work of Conor McPherson is perhaps not as widely known outside the Republic of Ireland as it deserves to be. The fluency of his use of dialogue and idiom is a gift to any actor or director and he is considered to be one of the best contemporary Irish playwrights. The *Daily Telegraph* named him 'the finest dramatist of his generation'.

First performed at The Royal Court Theatre in July 1997, *The Weir* toured the UK in 2001, and was briefly revived in 2013 at the Donmar Warehouse. It has been extensively staged in Europe and in the USA, where it has won many awards. It was judged to be one of the most influential plays of the 20th century, and theatre critic Michael Billington lists it as one of his 101 Best Plays. *The Weir* won the Laurence Olivier award for Best New Play for 1999.

Conor McPherson's plays examine relationships and personalities through dialogue rather than through action, and his use of monologue to bring out the real substance of a character is outstanding.

Other major works are '*Dublin Carol*' (2000), '*Port Authority*' (2001), and '*Shining City*' (2004).

There will be a 15 minute interval

WARNING: The play contains strong language throughout.

The video and / or audio recording of this performance by any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited



The Weir is set in the bar of The Weir pub, near Sligo, in the spring of 1995.

Cast

Jack:	Graham Greensit
Finbar:	Dean Franklin
Jim:	Alan Buttery
Brendan:	Joe Counce
Valerie:	Ayshea Megyery

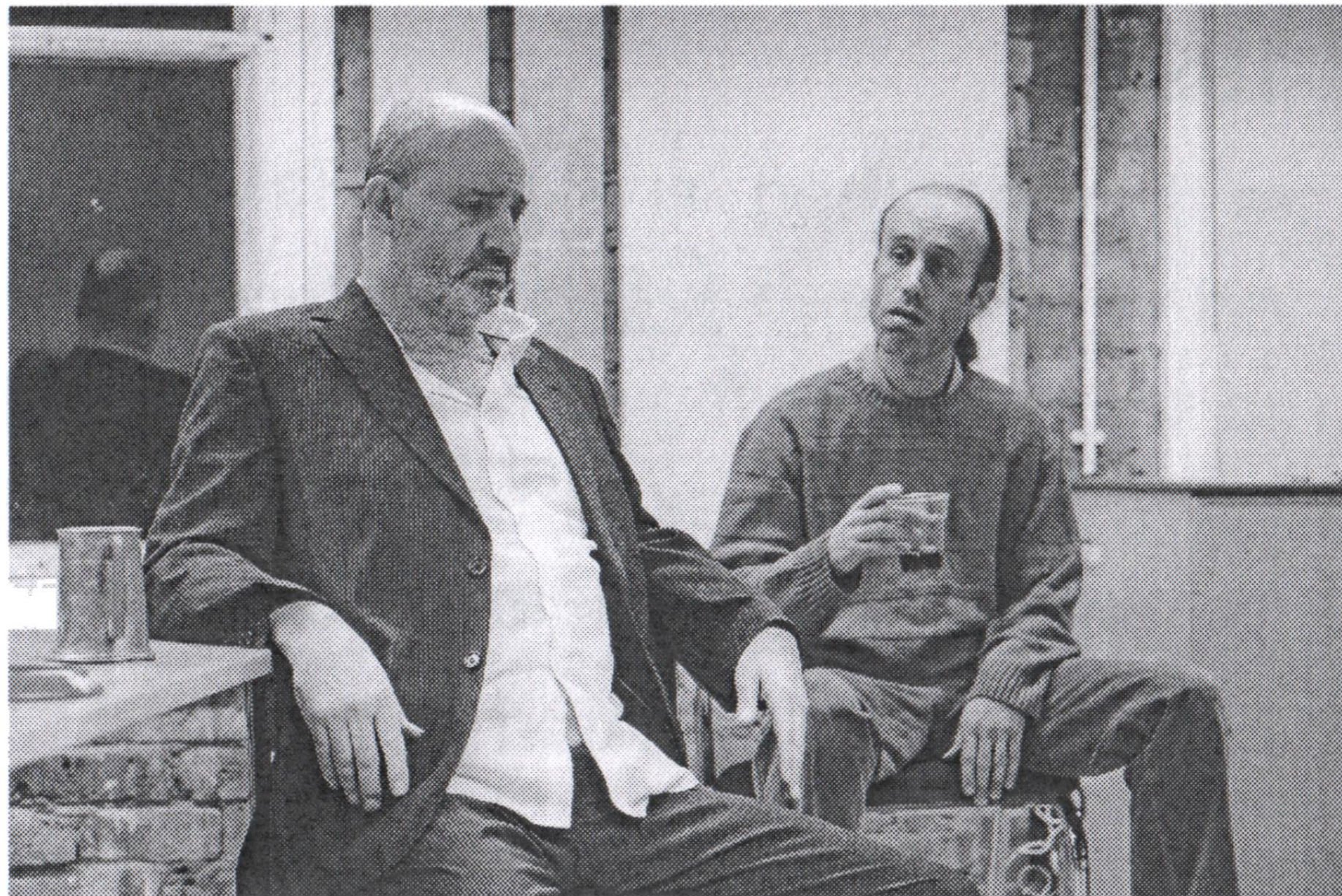
Production Team

Director:	Ken Taylor
Production Manager:	Jenny Carter
Stage Manager:	Camilla Asher
Set Construction:	Martyn Drake, Rich Francis, Steve Fryatt, Ben Hopwood
Properties:	Denise Davies, Elizabeth Hayes, Rachel Vernelle
Wardrobe:	Zoe Freedman, Maria Kwater
Sound:	Rick Brookes
Lighting:	Carriageworks technical team
Front of House Team:	Maureen Willis and LAC Members



Rehearsal Photographs

Mark Hillyer photography





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Rehearsal Photographs

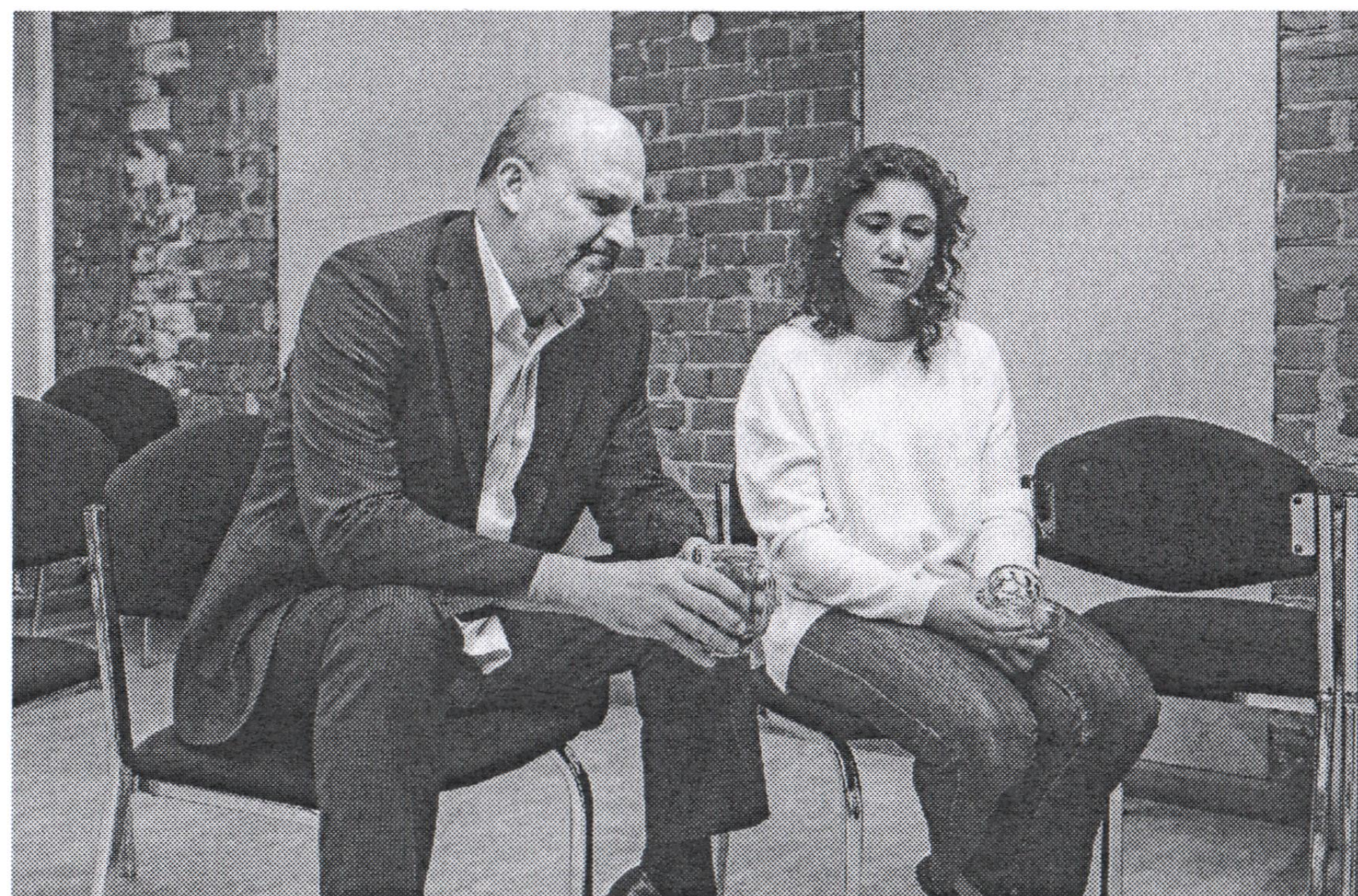
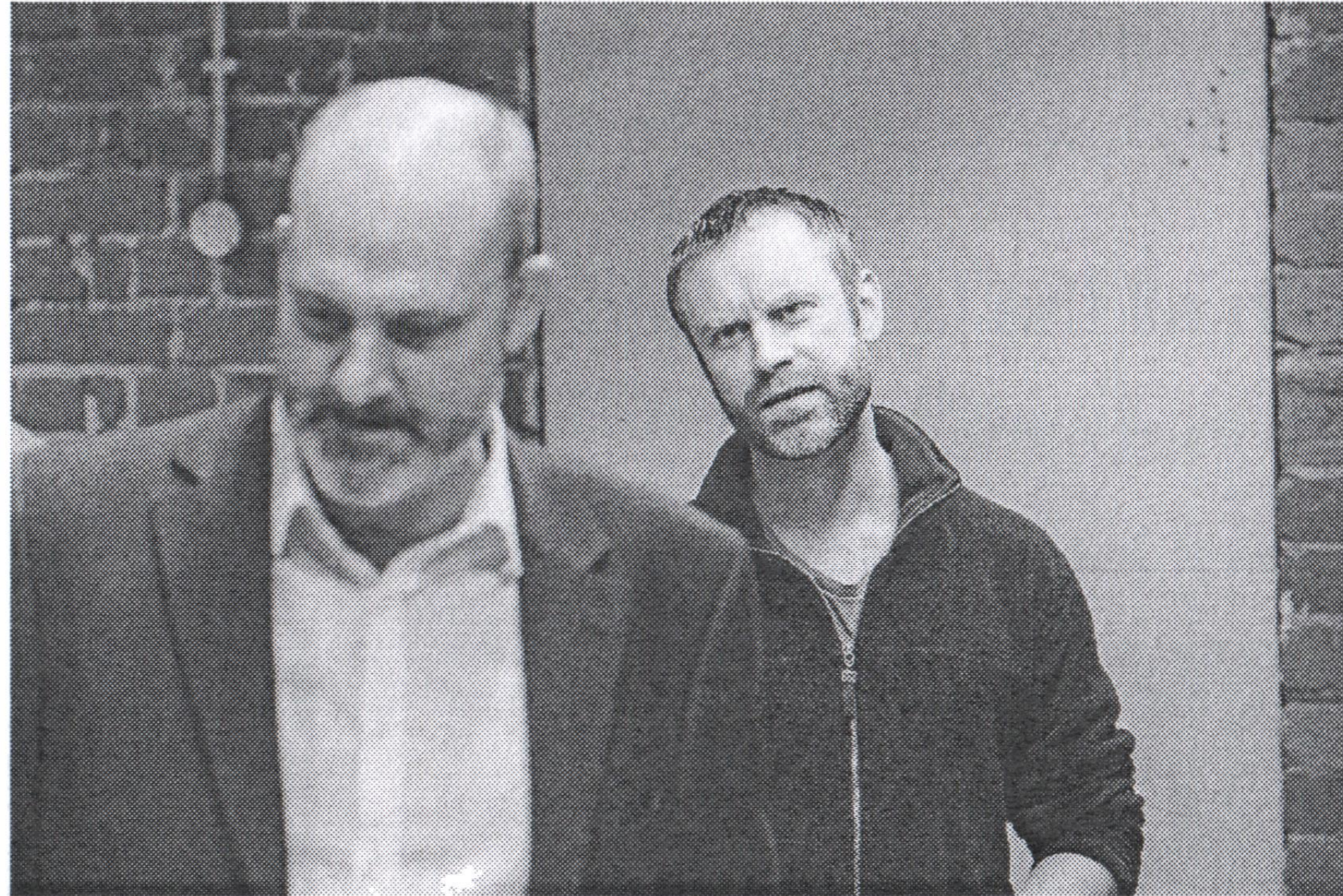
Mark Hillyer photography





Rehearsal Photographs

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News and info



[http://twitter.com/#!/
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Updates on the go

Visit <http://www.leedsartscentre.org.uk/>



Acknowledgements

Leeds Arts Centre would like to thank the following companies for their support with this production

Thank you to The Victoria Hotel for the loan of tables and chairs. The Victoria Hotel is a favourite of the cast and crew, find us in there after the show.



The Victoria Hotel

28 Great George Street, Leeds, West Yorkshire,
LS1 3DL

Thank you to Seamus who has worked with the cast on their Irish accents.

Seamus Doherty
Dialect Consultant

The programme for this production was produced with the kind assistance of

Lewis Francis Blackburn Bray
solicitors

14-16 Paradise Square Sheffield S1 2DE
0114 272 9721
www.lfbbsolicitors.co.uk

Phil Dodgson & Partners Limited

Phil Dodgson & Partners are Pudsey based accountants offering services throughout West Yorkshire and surrounding areas and are pleased to work with Leeds Arts Centre in the preparation of their annual accounts.

49 Chapeltown, Pudsey, West Yorkshire, LS28 7RZ Tel: 0113 255 7406



Leeds Arts Centre's forthcoming productions are:-

**After Midnight - Before Dawn by David Campton and
The Rose and Crown by JB Priestley**

Directed by Ken Taylor

Wednesday 26th – Saturday 29th April 2017

In *After Midnight – Before Dawn* – set in the late 16th/early 17th Century – a group of six women are confined in a prison cell: they are to be hanged at dawn for witchcraft. Only one of them seems unmoved by the situation, and being questioned she is certain that since she is a real witch, Satan will not let her hang. They all implore her to help them achieve the protection of Satan, with unforeseen results.

In *The Rose and Crown* – set in 1947 – the occupants of a snug bar in a pub are bemoaning their lot, and the misery of shortages and rationing in post-war Britain. A stranger has entered and listens to their conversation. The stranger tells the drinkers that he is the Angel of Death, and that he is one short of his daily quota. The room is sealed off and they can't leave. He is happy for them to choose who his next victim will be, and given their misery he's sure they will have a volunteer.

Unspoken

Written and directed by Neil Rathmell and Trudy Stewart

Wednesday 5th – Saturday 8th July 2017 (plus Saturday Matinee)

Alex has a stammer. He has had a stammer all his life but few people know about it. Tonight he is on the cusp of changing his life. He plans to ask the girl he loves to marry him and also tell her all about his stammer. A momentous evening lies ahead. But he is afraid. We meet Alex as he gets ready to go out. He enters drying his hair, wearing only his underpants. Six figures in dark grey cloaks appear in the shadows on either side of him. These are the voices he has carried in his head for years and still hears tonight while he is getting ready to go out. Voices of parents, friends, teachers, children, acquaintances, people who have in some way added to the story of his stammer. They have the power to provoke, tease, freeze or empower, as all our personal memories do. But what part will they play in Alex's evening? Will he be burdened by memory, leaving all he wants to say unspoken or will he find the strength to break out of his old way of being and make a new life?

Blood and Ice by Liz Lochhead

(The story of the creation of Frankenstein)

Directed by Camilla Asher

Wednesday 18 October – Saturday 21st October 2017

Tickets for *After Midnight – Before Dawn/Rose and Crown* and *Unspoken*, available from the City Centre Box Office at the Town Hall or telephone 0113 376 0318.



<http://www.lcag.org.uk>

