

The Mitre Players present




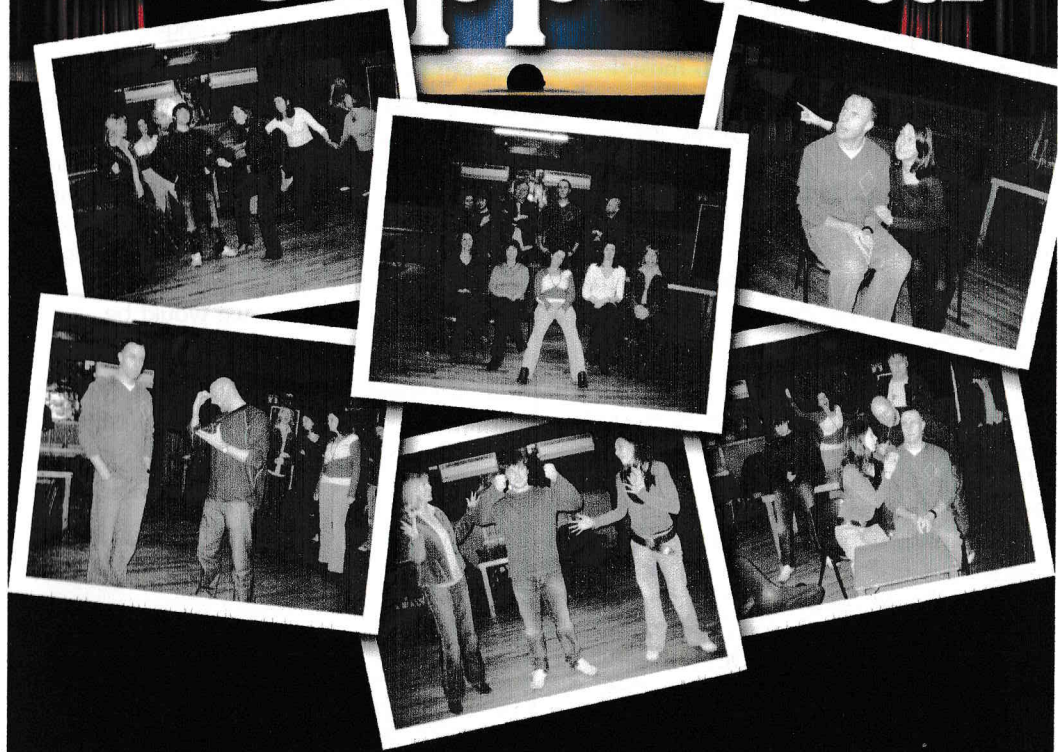
An original musical by
Chris Chambers and Andrew Rapps
Adapted from the novel by Jonathan Swift

The Mitre Theatre
Trinity School
Shirley Park
Croydon CR9 7AT

Thursday 17th to
Saturday 19th July 2008
at 7.30
Saturday Matinee at 2.30

Tickets £8.00 Box Office: Gill Frost: 0845 2255799
or tickets@mitreplayers.org.uk


A Chorus of
by Alan Ayckbourn
Disapproval



April 2008

Chairman's Letter

Welcome to you all as you join us in our 35th anniversary year. We have been celebrating this in several ways, one of which has been to change some of our schedules around so we can try out some new ideas.

We started the year with our pantomime **Sleeping Beauty** and now move on to a 'proper' play. This is the second Alan Ayckbourn play that we have presented in the last 18 months (or third, if you count **House and Garden** as two plays!).

We welcome back Di Jones to direct **Chorus of Disapproval** our Dramatic offering for this year, although the piece is often referred to as a play with music! Recently Di has directed **Prime Time with Jean** and **Cyrano de Bergerac** for us and we are grateful that she has found the time to direct another challenging show. Until recently Di has also run our regular Tuesday evening tap classes which were instigated after **Stepping Out**, when the cast enjoyed tap dancing so much, they begged for more!

This summer sees us touring again to the Minack Theatre, Cornwall during August with the aptly named **Gulliver's Travels**. The run in Croydon will take place here, in the Mitre Theatre, during July. This original musical written by two of our members, Chris Chambers and Andy Rapps, is based on all four of the stories in Jonathan Swift's book and promises to be an evening to remember. Directed by Julia Ascott, this new show has a huge cast, stunning original costumes and amazing special effects. We look forward to seeing you either here in Croydon or in Cornwall.

We are considering making a change to our autumn/winter schedule this year and one option is to produce a "Christmas Show" in early December instead of an autumn play and Christmas pantomime. If

you have any thoughts or comments on this, please contact Ian Brown on 020 8654 0346 use the forum on our website.

Our newsletters are published regularly throughout the year so if you don't receive one, why not become a 'Friend of the Mitre Players' and keep yourself up to date with all our news. Also don't forget our website, which is also bursting with information. Details of both the above can be found elsewhere in this programme.

Many of you will be saddened to learn of the recent death of Joan Armfield, our first choreographer and loyal supporter of the Mitres since our very beginning.

The Mitres often stage shows which are not the tried and tested diet of productions tackled by many societies. Indeed, this is one of our major strengths. We are always interested in welcoming new members and accepting offers of help from friends and colleagues. If you are interested in being involved with any of our forthcoming shows, in any capacity, we would be pleased to hear from you.

We also thank you, our audiences, for your continuing support and hope you enjoy tonight's show.

Best wishes to you all.

Andy Thompson

Chairman.



The Mitre Players

The Dramatic Society of The Old Boys' Association of Trinity School

Present

A Chorus of Disapproval

By Alan Ayckbourn

Thursday 10th to Saturday 12th April 2008

The Mitre Theatre, Trinity School,
Shirley Park, Croydon

The Mitre Players would like to thank the Governors and Headmaster of Trinity School for allowing us to perform A Chorus of Disapproval in The Mitre Theatre and Robin McKinley, Mario Sammut, Martin Doolan and team for their invaluable help as well as all the school staff for the patience and understanding they have shown whilst we invade the school.

Please note that smoking is prohibited throughout the school and grounds.

We would also respectfully remind you that the taking of photographs and the use of audio and video recording equipment is strictly forbidden.

Please remember to switch off all mobile phones & pagers. THANK YOU.

An amateur production, by arrangement with Samuel French Ltd.

The Mitre Players

Officials

President Mark Bishop
Past Presidents Chris Tarrant, Robin Wilson
Vice-Presidents Julia Ascott, Gillian Bartle,
John Bartle, Alan Bishop, Martin Garnett, Warwick Jones,
Peter Stockwell, Andy Thompson, Martin Tyrrell, Anna Warnock, Colin Warnock

Current Committee

Chairman Andy Thompson
Secretary Kelly Bennett
Treasurer Alan Bishop
Additional Members Ian Brown, Julia Gibbs,
Di Jones, Dave Price, Anna Warnock

Additional Contacts

Box Office Hotline 0845 2255799
Theatre Club Organiser Colin Warnock
Membership Secretary Julia Ascott

The Mitre Players is the dramatic society of the Old Boys of Trinity School (The Old Mid Whitgiftian Association). We are a very friendly and sociable society, presenting 4 or 5 productions a year in a wide variety of venues. Putting on a show not only requires people on stage, but also involves a great deal of hard work behind the scenes. We design, build and paint our own sets, find and make our own props, make many of our own costumes and use "in house" musicians whenever possible.

We would welcome any new members, so if you have any aspirations to act, sing, dance or play a musical instrument, we would like to hear from you. If you prefer to remain out of the spotlight, building scenery, lighting, painting,

making costumes, making props, doing "Front of House" or simply would like to make tea for the team, we would still like to hear from you.

Most of our rehearsals take place at the Old Mid Whitgiftian Association Clubhouse in Sanderstead. The bar facilities at the clubhouse lend a social and convivial atmosphere to our rehearsals and all members are encouraged to use the facilities at Sanderstead as often as possible.

If you would like more information, please contact our Membership Secretary: Julia Ascott on 020 8239 1010 or visit our Web Site at www.mitreplayers.org.uk

The Beggar's Opera

The mounting of **The Beggar's Opera** on 29 June 1728 made John Gay celebrated and wealthy. This burlesque of Italian Opera exceeded all known receipts despite initial concerns of both theatre managers and audiences. With 62 consecutive performances, it became the longest running play in English stage history and went on to become the most performed text in the 18th century. The play depicts a world of thieves, pickpockets and prostitutes. Ironically, Gay presents these as the more trustworthy characters with their own moral code, in contrast to the corruption of the Prime Minister Sir Robert Walpole and London's elite society.

The plot of the play focuses on the exploits of the highwayman Macheath. At the heart of the action is the love triangle between him, Polly Peacham and Lucy Lockit. When Polly's father, who happens to be Macheath's fence, discovers that his daughter is married to the highwayman, he is furious and can only reconcile his anger with the thought of reporting him to the authorities and gaining a reward. Polly alerts her husband to the danger but he is later betrayed by prostitutes he meets in a local tavern. He is arrested and taken to Newgate

Prison where the gaoler is Mr Lockit. Lucy, who is pregnant with Macheath's child, confronts her lover about his marriage to Polly. He vehemently denies any wrongdoing, claiming the events are a figment of Polly's imagination. Consequently, Lucy steals the keys and secures his release, only for him to be recaptured and sentenced to a public hanging. The Beggar, representing the playwright, halts the action and facilitates a reprieve for Macheath, blaming the popular expectation of a happy ending.

Gay uses his text to criticise the corruption that was rife in the 18th century, using Peacham and Lockit in particular to symbolise the amoral people who held positions of power. Macheath initially perpetuates the common romantic perception of outlaws and uses his personality to manipulate the women he encounters. However, the play suggests that he is a flawed man, which in turn directs the audience to see past the image and to look at the man behind it. Ayckbourn cleverly uses songs and dialogue from *The Beggar's Opera* to comment on the 'activities' of the members of PALOS.



The Cast

Guy Jones	NEIL O'GORMAN
Dafydd ap Llewellyn	DAVE PRICE
Hannah Llewellyn	JULIA GIBBS
Fay Hubbard	KATHERINE BOTTOMLEY
Ian Hubbard	IAN BROWN
Rebecca Huntley-Pike	JULIA ASCOTT
Jarvis Huntley-Pike	WARWICK JONES
Enid Washbrook	CLAIRE ALI
Ted Washbrook	ALEX GREENSLADE
Linda Washbrook	SAMANTHA RING
Mr Ames	FRASER MACDONALD
Bridget Baines	LORRAINE PRICE
Crispin Usher	PAUL GRACE
Raymond	ANDY HOLTON
Stagehand	RICHARD JONES
Chorus	MARY HOLTON
Chorus	JO LAKIN

Director
Di Jones

Music Coordinator
Fraser Macdonald

Set Coordinator
Alan Collins

Lighting Designer
Matt Beal

Sound
James McLeod

Wardrobe Mistress
Anna Warnock

Period Costumes
Eclectia

Stage Manager
Alan Collins

Scenic Artist
Jill Wilson

Backstage Assistance
Gillian Bartle
Alan Bishop
Mark Bruggemann
Liz Dolman
Di Jones
Fraser Macdonald
Derek Lee
Nic Lee
Dave Richards
Charles Thomas
Andy Thompson

Props
Mary Holton
Di Jones

Photography
Charles Marriott

Prompter
Morven Rae

Handbill Design
James Beal

Programme
Alan Bishop

Box Office
Gill Frost

Publicity
Tamsin Reeve

Front of House
Friends
of the Mitre Players

Refreshments
Friends
of the Mitre Players

Claire Ali (Enid Washbrook)

Claire has been a Mitre for 15 years and has enjoyed playing Enid. Rehearsals have been fun and interesting – an amateur dramatic group rehearsing an amateur dramatic group who are rehearsing a play with a play ... or something like that anyway. Claire's last couple of roles were Mrs Sowerberry in **Oliver!** and Mavis in **Stepping Out**.

Julia Ascott (Rebecca Huntley-Pike)

Julia was surprised to discover the last full length play she acted in was **Stepping Out** in 2004 when she played Vera. She seems to be playing a similar character in this play, but without the rubber gloves & tap shoes! She has enjoyed the rehearsals – especially when Di suggested that Rebecca should be addicted to chocolate and alcohol – this has taken much practise to get the technique absolutely right. Unbelievably this is the 63rd production with the Mitre Players that Julia has been in on stage and she has directed or choreographed at least 20 others – so you'd have thought she would have had enough by now. But no, she is looking forward to directing our summer touring production **Gulliver's Travels** at the Minack – which will be something of a family affair as 12 of her immediate family will either be in it or on the crew – even Marcus! When not at rehearsals her teenage sons keep her on her toes and in her spare time she works in a busy school office.



Katherine Bottomley (Fay Hubbard)

In the last couple of plays she has been in, Katherine's roles have included a battered tapdancer and a no-nonsense, bi-lingual minder. The 'gregarious' Fay is a considerably different character but who would pass up the chance to be married to Ian Brown and to seduce Neil O'Gorman in one evening? Even better, there has been no need to spend time learning tricky dance routines as the members of PALOS don't have a clue about what they are doing. In her spare time, Katherine is hoping for a lottery win.

Ian Brown (Ian Hubbard)

This is the second time that Ian has played a character called Ian in a play, and in both cases he hopes that the name is all he has in common with the character. He is delighted that Di has once again cast him against type in this play and also that having wooed Katherine Bottomley in **Stepping Out**, he is now married to her.

Julia Gibbs (Hannah Llewellyn)

Other than a 'blink and you miss it' brief appearance as a Wannabe Aurora in **Sleeping Beauty**, Julia was last seen as Miss Jean Brodie in **Prime Time with Jean** and Lindy in **House & Garden**, all for The Mitre Players. Julia would like to dedicate her performance to Di's very lovely and demure cat, Jemima, who religiously sat and watched lots of early and painful rehearsals. Her own choice!! True to form it has been sometimes difficult to tell where Mitre Players' rehearsals end and PALOS ones begin. How perceptive, Mr Ayckbourn!

Paul Grace (Crispin Usher)

Paul has been a Mitre Player for 9 years now and in that time has performed in many a musical and panto, but it's a long time since he's performed in a play without music (well, almost). Favourite Mitre roles include Mack Sennett in **The Biograph Girl**, Billy in **Honk!** and Buttons in **Cinderella, Charleston!**. He has also performed in **Godspell, Return to the Forbidden Planet** and **The Hunting of the Snark**. Elsewhere Paul's enjoyed playing Seymour in **Little Shop of Horrors**, Cookie in **Return to the Forbidden Planet**, Armand in **The Scarlet Pimpernel** and most recently, Bobby in **Crazy for You**. You may notice this back catalogue doesn't contain any particularly unpleasant characters so Paul has really enjoying playing Crispin.

Alex Greenslade (Ted Washbrook)

Alex is a veteran Mitre Player who hopes his casting as Ted is not too close to the truth. However, since he is breaking his 'one show per year' rule, he is grateful to the director for the mercifully small number of lines and for the chance to practise his singing before **Gulliver's Travels**.

Andy Holton (Raymond)

You've been to his Revue Bar, now see one of his little shows! Andy used to play a lot of awkward old codgers, such as Rainbow in **The Happiest Days of Your Life**, Saul the stationmaster in **The Ghost**

Train & Sam Pecker in **Quiet Weekend**, but has now become a backroom boy - lighting & stage management a speciality. See if you can spot him.

Mary Holton (Chorus)

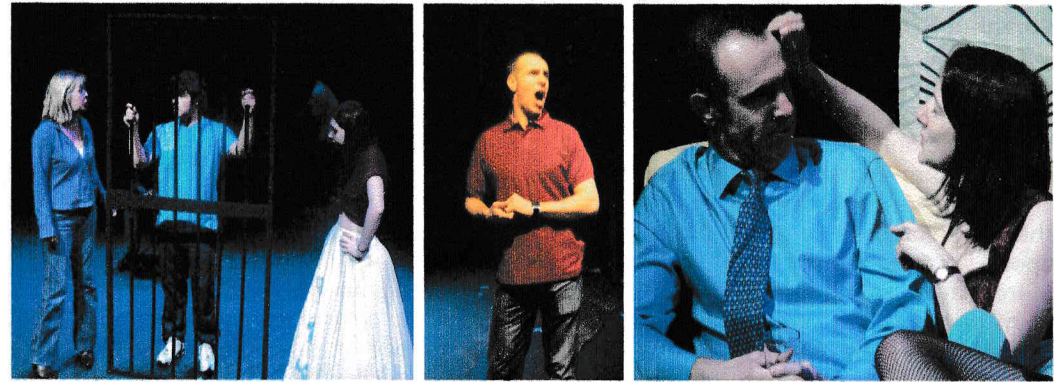
Yet another part, like her appearances in **Quasimodo, Jack the Ripper** and **The Roar of the Greasepaint**, where she can look down-and-out, dance and sing.

Jo Lakin (Chorus)

Jo is studying Theatre Design at The Welsh Academy of Music & Dramatic Art in Cardiff. Jo is also a singer and flautist but is too busy to do anything other than design sets at the moment. We are delighted to welcome her back, albeit briefly, to help us with ACOD. Previous Mitre productions include **House and Garden** and **Cyrano de Bergerac**

Di Jones (Director)

Di joined the Mitre Players in 1980. She directed the first Junior Mitres production of **Dracula Spectacula** in 1983 and three members of that cast are in this production! Directing **A Chorus of Disapproval** has been a joy because the cast have worked so hard, been constantly enthusiastic and made her laugh so much, despite the freezing conditions of the rehearsal hall. Di is looking forward to returning to the stage for the first time in 10 years for **Gulliver's Travels**, this year's summer show at the Minack. It seemed like a good idea in January.....



Richard Jones (Stagehand)

Richard is studying Economics and Politics at Exeter University. He is also actively involved in EXTV, the university TV station, as an actor, presenter and editor. His favourite role to date is Salty in **Teechers** (John Godber). Previous Mitre productions include **House and Garden** (Ayckbourn), **Cyrano de Bergerac** (Edmond Rostand) and **Turnabout** (Tyrrell & Warnock)

Warwick Jones (Jarvis Huntley-Pike)

Although only a relatively small role Warwick has found it as difficult to learn as **George III** or **Cyrano de Bergerac**. He is playing a northern 'know all' in his late fifties and is of course "ageing up" for the part. He is also being directed by his wife for the third time and they are still talking (or at least she is).

Fraser Macdonald (Mr. Ames)

No stranger to the stage, Fraser has performed in numerous pantomimes and plays with The Mitre Players over the years, having acted as pantomime Dame on several occasions, as Fagin in **Oliver!** and as a bagpipe-playing Headmistress in the spoof version of **Miss Brodie**. However this is his first incursion into the music department playing the rehearsal pianist Mr Ames in Ayckbourn's **A Chorus of Disapproval**. He promises not to play too many ad libs and to try to hit the right notes - and in the right order. He has

recently translated a powerful modern Spanish drama into English and is looking forward to The Mitre Players premiering this theatrical first next year.

Neil O'Gorman (Guy Jones)

Neil sings in this show and he would like it to be known that if you think he sounds awful it is because the character he is playing cannot sing. However, if you think he sounds great then it's all him. He would like to thank his wife Lucy for typing these programme notes.

David Price (Dafydd ap Llewellyn)

Despite his name, Dave claims not to have one ounce of Welsh blood running in his veins; he couldn't stand the close harmony singing anyway! Coming from good Irish and English stock, he has his Dad's Max Boyce LP collection to thank for his Welsh accent...which explains a lot. This is Dave's second performance in an Alan Ayckbourn play having played Teddy in **House and Garden**. He's slightly concerned that he keeps picking up parts whose characters seem to be perpetually on the edge of desperation. If he had any hair, he'd be tearing it out! In real life, Dave teaches at Trinity School and is married to Lorraine. Dafydd ap Rhys would like to dedicate his performance to proud Welshmen everywhere.....and also to say 'Fi m iawn , iawn 'n chwith'*

*I'm very, very sorry!



Lorraine Price (Bridget Baines)

Having long since dispensed with social niceties, Lorraine has been somewhat typecast as Bridget! Seriously though, loud, intolerant, bad-tempered and intolerant are epithets more normally applied to her husband. Still, at least she's had someone to model her role upon! Lorraine last appeared with the Mitre Players as the Queen of Slumberland in this year's pantomime **Sleeping Beauty**. Alas, you'll have no chance of sleeping through her performance as Bridget tonight. She's particularly enjoyed fighting everyone and dedicates her performances this week to stage managers and technical crew everywhere!

Sam Ring (Linda Washbrook)

This is Sam's first show with the Mitre Players...actually, it's her first show for some time. Last time she trod the boards, she was at school and played - a very youthful - Lady Bracknell in that Oscar Wilde thing that everyone does! Since then, she's confined her talents to directing - most recently, **Ke** here at Trinity where she teaches Drama and Religious Studies. However, she has gracefully deigned to act once more after being made an offer she couldn't refuse... something to do with rats I understand! Sam is getting married in the summer and she's been at great pains to point out that she's actually much nicer than her character, Linda. She'd like to dedicate her performance to spoilt brats everywhere.



Director's Notes

A Chorus of Disapproval is set in 'Middle England', in a small community that thrives on intrigue and gossip. PALOS the local amateur light operatic society is in rehearsal for **The Beggar's Opera**. Dafydd ap Llewellyn, the director, is the heart and soul of the society. His vision, to take the society to new heights with this difficult opera, is doomed almost from the start as one by one his leading men drop out. Luckily Guy Jones, a new member, is there to take on each new part, and save the show. However, all is not so happily resolved off stage and Guy unwittingly becomes involved in events that closely resemble the plot of the play PALOS are performing. Ayckbourn's clever dialogue and beautifully crafted set pieces ensure that you will be entertained throughout by this talented cast of Mitre Players.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 8th June 2008 at 6.00 pm.

OMWA Clubhouse, Lime Meadow Avenue, Sanderstead

Details: Kelly Bennett: 020 8460 4295

GULLIVER'S TRAVELS

Thursday 17th to Saturday 19th July 2008 at 7.30pm

(Saturday Matinee at 2.30pm)

The Mitre Theatre, Trinity School, Shirley Park, Croydon

Tickets: Gill Frost: 0845 2255799

and

Monday 18th to Friday 22nd August 2008 at 8.00pm

(Wednesday and Friday Matinees at 2.00pm)

The Minack Theatre, Porthcurno, Cornwall

Tickets: 01736 810181 (From May 5th)

END OF SEASON BARBECUE

Friday 12th September 2008 from 7.00pm

OMWA Clubhouse, Lime Meadow Avenue, Sanderstead.

Details from any committee member

MITRE QUIZ NIGHT

Friday 17th October 2008 at 7.30 pm.

OMWA Clubhouse, Lime Meadow Avenue, Sanderstead

Details: Alan Bishop: 01883 343923

Please make a note of the Box Office Details:

0845 2255799 (lo-call rate) or 07914 763422

or tickets@mitreplayers.org.uk

This applies to ALL our productions (apart from The Minack Theatre)