



*the
mitre
players*

present

CINDY-ELLA

The Rock and Roll Pantomime

By Martin Tyrrell & Colin Warnock

**At Trinity School, Shirley Park,
Croydon.**

**Thurs. 11th to Sat. 13th January
At 7.30 Saturday Matinee at 3.00**

Tickets £4.00 to £7.00

From Sheila Garnett: 020 8650 7882



the mitre players



**THE
BIOGRAPH
GIRL**

**The Mitre Theatre
26th to 28th October 2000**

The Chairman's Letter

Welcome to the Mitre Players' autumn production of 'The Biograph Girl', which tells the story of film in the early part of the century from the early silent movies, through to the 'Talkies'. We have changed our schedule from recent years to take advantage of the facilities offered at the Mitre Theatre and perform a musical rather than a play at this time of year.

Fresh from his role as Sir Jasper Fidget in our summer production, *The Country Wife*, Ian Brown returns to directing. Last year his production of *The Boy Friend* was a sell-out at both the clubhouse and Dawlish. We are looking forward to his follow-up.

Hannah Widger makes her debut as Musical Director for this production and is most welcome as the first ever female to fill this role for the Mitres. Hannah has performed in many of the bands for Mitre productions in previous years and we wish her every success, in what we hope will be the first of many appearances, in this position.

Although Tonia Porter has appeared in several of our shows, most recently as 'Lolita' in *The Boy Friend* and has choreographed for many other

societies, this is the first time she has accepted the gauntlet of Choreographer for the Mitres.

Our next show is the Rock and Roll Pantomime, 'Cindy-Ella'. This will also be performed here at Trinity, in 'Big School', on Thursday 11th, Friday 12th and Saturday 13th January. Premiered eleven years ago, this was a very popular show with both cast and audience and as such we have decided to revisit this popular pantomime fairytale. Written originally by Martin Tyrrell with music by Colin Warnock, 'Cindy-Ella' has been brought right up to date by Julia Ascott and should be great fun for all the family.

Looking further ahead, to next Easter, we are looking at staging a specialist production for existing and budding junior members (11-20 years old). This production will be a musical and will be open to anyone in the right age group. We invite potential thespians to contact us if interested in any aspect of theatre craft.

I hope you enjoy tonight's production and look forward to welcoming you to some of our future ones.

Andy Thompson. Chairman.

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Book by Warner Brown

Lyrics by Warner Brown and David Heneker

Music by David Heneker

Director: Ian Brown

Musical Director: Hannah Widger

Choreographer: Tonia Porter

The Mitre Theatre, Trinity School, Croydon.
Thursday 26th to Saturday 28th October 2000

An amateur production, by arrangement with Samuel French Ltd.



Please note that smoking is prohibited in the auditorium.
We would also respectfully remind you that the taking of photos and the use of audio and video recording equipment is strictly forbidden. Please remember to switch off all mobile phones and pagers. THANK YOU.

The Early Years (1912 to 1928)

- 1912 1st "Keystone" comedies, produced by Mack Sennett. Adolph Zukor founds The Famous Players. Biograph Films release **An Unseen Enemy** starring Lillian & Dorothy Gish.
- 1913 Mary Pickford signs with Zukor for \$2,000 per week. Vivien Leigh, Burt Lancaster, James Stewart & Danny Kaye born.
- 1914 Charlie Chaplin creates "The Tramp" in the film **Kid Auto Races**. Lois Weber directs **Merchant of Venice**. (USA's 1st Women director)
- 1915 World Premiere of D W Griffith's **Birth of a Nation**. Edison's "Motion Picture Patent Corporation" loses its monopoly.
- 1916 **Intolerance** (originally known as *The Mother and the Law*) released. Gregory Peck, Trevor Howard and Kirk Douglas born.
- 1917 *Intolerance* withdrawn as USA enters World War. Mary Pickford Stars in **Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm**.
- 1918 Mary Pickford paid \$250,000 for 3 films for "First National". Igmar Bergman & Rita Hayworth born.
- 1919 Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, Charlie Chaplin & D W Griffith establish "United Artists". Harold Lloyd seriously injured in publicity stunt that misfired.
- 1920 Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks charged with bigamy. Lillian Gish directs sister Dorothy in **Remodelling her Husband**.
- 1921 Fatty Arbuckle charged with "culpable homicide". Dirk Bogarde, Jane Russell & Deborah Kerr born.
- 1922 United Artists release **Robin Hood** starring Douglas Fairbanks. Paul Scofield, Judy Garland & Ava Gardner born.
- 1923 Cecil B DeMille's **The Ten Commandments** released. Richard Attenborough, Charlton Heston & Franco Zeffirelli born.
- 1924 Walt Disney releases **Alice's Day At The Sea**, a mixture of animation and live action. Marlon Brando, Lauren Bacall & Rock Hudson born.
- 1925 Lon Chaney stars in **Phantom of the Opera**. & **Ben Hur** Released. Paul Newman, Tony Curtis, Peter Sellers & Richard Burton born.
- 1926 Hitchcock's first film **The Pleasure Garden** & **First Pirate** (1st Technicolor Film) released. Jerry Lewis & Marilyn Monroe born.
- 1927 **Jazz Singer** (1st Talkie) & **Metropolis** released. The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences established.
- 1928 Mickey Mouse takes his first steps in Walt Disney's **Plane Crazy**. Stanley Kubrick, Shirley Temple & Laurence Harvey born.

The Players

Lillian Gish—a major star of silent films and a greatly respected figure of the American Theatre until her death in 1993.

Dorothy Gish—her younger sister and an equal success in silent films though in a lighter vein.

Mrs Mary Robinson Gish—actress mother of Lillian and Dorothy. Her close friend was Mrs Charlotte Smith, mother of Gladys Smith.

Gladys Smith—achieved international fame and considerable fortune as Mary Pickford, "the world's sweetheart". Although not the original "Biograph Girl", she inherited the title when Florence Lawrence left Griffith to go to another studio.

David Wark (D.W.) Griffith—greatest of the pioneer film directors. His classics *The Birth of a Nation*, and *Intolerance* are considered to be amongst the most influential films of all time. He was the first director to "cross-cut" between different scenes.

G W "Billy" Bitzer—Griffith's cameraman for 16 years. Primitive cameras obliged him to improvise which accidentally gave Griffith some of his finest effects, among them the fade-out.

Johannes Charlemagne Epping—Griffith's accountant who secretly invested his money in non-revocable annuities and saved him from spending his last years in penury.

Rose Smith—Griffith's long-time assistant, but the character as presented in this play is a compilation of several different people.

Adolph Zukor—one of the small time salesmen, mostly from Central Europe, who became the big-time bosses of Hollywood. He founded Paramount Pictures in 1916. He died in 1976 aged 103.

Mack Sennett—the king of silent film comedy who introduced Charlie Chaplin to the screen and created the Keystone Kops.

W L "Spec" Hall— pioneer scenic designer, was largely responsible for the famous set design of *Babylon*. It was often thought Griffiths produced his own designs but Hall's plans still exist for *Intolerance* to disprove this.



The Cast

Lillian Gish Cathy Newitt
 Dorothy Gish Carolyn Backway
 Momma Margaret Stockwell
 Mary Pickford Kelly Beard
 D.W. Griffith Paul Longhurst
 Epping Mick Scott
 Rose Smith Lorraine Titchener
 Bitzer Dominic Binefa
 Adolph Zukor John Bartle
 Mack Sennett Paul Grace
 Spec Mary Holton

Actresses, Henchmen, Publicists, Reporters, etc.

Julia Ascott, Francesca Binefa, Katherine Bottomley,
 Ian Brown, Alan Collins, Megan Harries-Rees,
 Dave Richards, Anna Tarrant



The Band

Bass Lewis Brito-Babapulle
 Clarinet Hannah Widger
 Keyboards Keith O'Gorman
 Percussion Craig Backway
 Saxophone Phil Evans
 Trumpets Pat Price, Rob Sneddon & Chris Hickox

Synopsis of Scenes and Songs

ACT ONE (1912 - 1915)

Nickelodeon (New York City)
 The Moving Picture Show Company

The Biograph Studio Roof (New York City)
 Workin' in Flickers Mary Griffith
 The Moment I Close My Eyes Griffith
 Workin' in Flickers (reprise) Mary & Company

Zukor's Office (Paramount Studios, California)

Biograph Studio (California)
 Every Lady Lillian, Griffith & Bitzer
 I Just Wanted to Make Him Laugh Sennett & Lillian

Paramount Studios
 I Like to be the Way I Am in My Own Front Parlour Mary

Biograph Studio (California)
 Beyond Babel Griffith & Company

There will be an interval of twenty minutes during which refreshments will be served in the foyer.

ACT TWO (1916 - 1928)

Outside a Movie Theatre
 A David Griffith Show Company
 More Than a Man Lillian

Biograph Studio (California)
 The Industry Rose & Company
 Gentle Fade Griffith

Rose's Party
 One Long Party Rose & Company
 The Biograph Girl Mary & Company
 One of the Pioneers Griffith
 Put it in the Tissue Paper Sennett, Mary & Lillian
 Workin' in Flickers (reprise) Company

The Production Team

Director	Ian Brown
Musical Director	Hannah Widger
Choreographer	Tonia Porter
Stage Manager	Alan Collins
Lighting Designer	Alan Bishop
Sound	James McLeod
Wardrobe	Anna Warnock
Props	Sue Carter & Jan Richards
Set Design	Alan Bishop, Alan Collins & Jillian Wilson
Technical & Stage Crew	Gillian Bartle, Sue Carter, Martin Garnett, Enid Ghent, Julian Parsons, Dave Richards, Andy Thompson & Lucy Thompson
Rehearsal Pianist & Assistant M.D.	Keith O'Gorman
Poster & Programme	Alan Bishop & Anna Warnock
Programme Biographies	Colin Warnock
Box Office	Julia Gibbs
Front of House	Martin Garnett & Friends of the Mitre Players
Refreshments	Alex Greenslade & Friends of the Mitre Players
Photography	Marcus Ascott
Foyer Display	Diana Dobson & Anna Warnock
Production Manager	Julia Gibbs



The Mitre Players wish to thank the Headmaster and Governors of Trinity School for allowing us to perform *The Biograph Girl* in The Mitre Theatre; Graham Kellas, John Bertram and their staff for their cooperation; The Geoffrey Whitworth Theatre for loan of the staging.

Meet the Cast

JULIA ASCOTT lists her favourite Mitre roles over the past 26 years as Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Aldonza in *Man of La Mancha*, Vanya in *The Cherry Orchard* and choruses in *Quasimodo*, *Chicago*, *Jack the Ripper* and *Guys & Dolls*. Most challenging roles to date have been Margery Pinchwife in *The Country Wife* and as mother to Oliver and Nathan! She is a part-time TV researcher and voice-over-er (?!).

CAROLYN BACKWAY is a part-time midwife and joined us "a long time ago when she was 11" She particularly enjoyed being in *The Wizard of Oz* (1992), the first *Quasimodo* (1990), the original *Cindy-Ella* (also 1990) and was Hortense in last year's *The Boy Friend*. She enjoys tennis and theatre-going, though spare time is limited - she has three lively boys to look after, the eldest of which is tonight's dyslexic drummer!

JOHN BARTLE (Adolph Zukor), or Lord Sanderstead to us humble commoners, is simply a Mitre Players legend. Right from his first appearance in 1975 as Claudius in *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead*, through Bob Cratchit in our 3rd panto, Herr Schulz in *Cabaret*, plus countless doctors and vicars, his performing skills - particularly dancing - have been the talk of the foyer. Also, he can waggle his ears and raise his eyebrows at the same time; watch out for this during tonight's performance.

KELLY BEARD (Mary Pickford) has been a Mitre for ten years now and we have watched her blossom from chorus to principal roles. She was Sharon in *A Slice of Saturday Night*, Amy in *Where's Charley?*, Dulcie in *The Boy Friend* and has played lots of pretty juvenile pantomime leads. However, Kelly is no fluffy empty-headed floozy - she teaches maths in a local secondary school!

DOMINIC BINEFA (Bitzer) is a student at John Fisher School. Although this is his first Mitre production, Dominic has appeared in numerous shows elsewhere. Favourite roles include Fat Sam in *Bugsy Malone* and the Scribe in *Pendle Hill*. He was recently heard as the deep, sexy voice of Audrey II in Chipstead's *Little Shop of Horrors*. Other hobbies include playing guitar and listening to music.

FRANCESCA BINEFA is Dominic's younger sister. Past productions have included *The King and I (CODA)*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Bugsy Malone* (Chipstead) and *Bustar's Last Stand* (Miller Centre). Francesca's hobbies (surprise, surprise!) are acting, singing and dancing. This is her first Mitre production.

KATHERINE BOTTOMLEY has actually performed in *The Biograph Girl* before, for another company. She joined the Mitre Players in 1993 and has performed in several musicals for us including *Little Shop of Horrors*, *The Mikado*, *The Boy Friend*. She was Dick (principal boy) in *The Millennium Dame* last Christmas. Interestingly, she has been a volunteer English tutor to a Kurdish refugee family.....gosh!

IAN BROWN (Director) is returning to directing, following his debut with us on last year's *The Boy Friend*. He has, though, been a Mitre since *Sir Merryman* in 1983. Favourite roles include Jack in *Charley's Aunt and Where's Charley?* and he played the title role in January's *The Millennium Dame*. Ian is the Principal of the Helen O'Grady Drama Academy and lists his hobbies as drama (phew!) and going on holiday.

ALAN COLLINS (Stage Manager), though a printer by profession, has been steeped in stagework for most of his life. His first Mitre involvement was in 1997 with *Quasimodo* at the Minack Theatre, Cornwall. In common with most stage technicians, Alan loves to appear gloomy and miserable, claiming that the actors just get in the way of his scenery, but now and again we see his cherubic grin and hear his little elfish chuckle.

PAUL GRACE (Mack Sennett) is a student teacher and gym coach, having left Trinity School in July. His first appearance for us was in 1998 as a clown in *Turnabout!* Since then, he has played Paul/Terry in *A Slice of Saturday Night* and "Boy" in *The Country Wife*. Paul is an accomplished gymnast and juggler.

MEGAN HARRIES-REES attends Riddlesdown High School. She made her Mitre Players Debut as a babe in arms in 1988 as baby Von Trapp in *The Sound of Coarse Music*. She was Frank junior in our *Merrily We Roll Along* and has also played Peter Quince in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Her hobbies are singing, dancing, acting and cross-country running.

MARY HOLTON (Spec) joined the Mitre Players long ago in the mists of time. She lists her favourite roles as Mustardseed in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a prisoner in *Man of La Mancha* and the dregs of Paris in *Quasimodo* - indeed, Mary seems to specialize in playing the dregs of everywhere! She "pushes paper" for a living and enjoys reading, gardening, cross-stitch (do people still do that?) and Dr. Who.

PAUL LONGHURST (D.W. Griffith) is making his Mitre debut, though he is no stranger to the stage. Past roles have included P.T. Barnum in *Barnum*, Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*, Salieri in *Amadeus* and appeared in *Julius Caesar* with the R.S.C. He has also musically directed *Little Shop of Horrors*. During the day, Paul is a disaster recovery consultant, so it seems odd that the Mitre Players haven't used his services before!

CATHY NEWITT (Lillian Gish) joined the Mitre Players in 1990 for *Godspell*. Since then, highlights have included her appearances as a dwarf in 1993's *Snow White* and Mrs. Alithea in *The Country Wife*. Cathy is engaged to Paul, who is just above her in this list of biographies; when they're married, she'll appear before him.

TONIA PORTER (Choreographer) first appeared for us in *Robin Hoodlum* (January 1998). She was a perfect young lady in last year's *The Boy Friend* and now makes her choreographic debut with us, though she has previously choreographed and danced extensively for other local groups. That must be how she manages to stay so thin!

DAVE RICHARDS has been with the Mitres since he helped with lighting on 1990's *Quasimodo*. He is now a regular at the set-building and technical sessions, where he demonstrates similar qualities to those of Alan Collins (see above)! Recently, Dave has made several on-stage appearances, either to make up the numbers or because he enjoys wearing strange costumes...

MICK SCOTT (Epping) joined us in the summer for *The Country Wife*, where he played Pinchwife. Past roles include Bill Sykes in *Oliver!* and the Ringmaster in *Barnum*. Mick works as a Local Studies Librarian and his hobbies include juggling, magic, history and folk music. Apparently, he once taught Frank Bruno to Morris Dance.

MARGARET STOCKWELL (Mamma) joined the Mitre Players in 1982 and has performed in most of our productions since. Favourite roles include Mrs. Kenwigs in *Nicholas Nickleby* (1995), Lady Brockhurst in *The Boy Friend* (1999) and Old Lady Squeamish in *The Country Wife* earlier this year. Margaret works as a secretary, with her husband, Pete.

ANNA TARRANT is making her first appearance with the Mitre Players, having attended Downey Lodge Speech and Drama School. Her hobbies are swimming, running, travel and cinema. She currently works as a secretary in investment banking but is hoping to be a children's TV presenter. Failing that, she could always stay with the Mitre Players!

LORRAINE TITCHENER (Rose Smith) is a student teacher. She joined us in 1997 for *Robin Hoodlum* and has appeared in several of our shows since, including *The Boy Friend* (as Maisie) and *Merrily We Roll Along* (as Gussie). She has also played Lady Jacqueline in *Me and My Girl*. Her hobbies include socialising and doing crosswords - they don't seem to match somehow...

HANNAH WIDGER (Musical Director) studied music at Trinity College and then completed a Masters Degree at the Royal College of Music. She is now a teacher and also performs regularly as a soloist. She first appeared in the orchestra for *Quasimodo* (1997) and has since played for us regularly. Incidentally, she played clarinet for 3 series of *Last of the Summer Wine*.