

# FOOTLIGHTS

The Newsletter for Barton Theatre Company  
Issue 30:October 2013

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## 1. EDITORIAL

Welcome to the October edition of Footlights.

September has been a busy old month at Barton so we have a stack of news for you. On top of that Barton hasn't been the only thing keeping me busy. I've been watching plenty of theatre as well as taking part in it. So we also have a couple of reviews too.

With all that and the usual Quiz and Dates For Your Diary, we're in danger of running out of room

Before we crack on with all these goodies, just to let you know that next month's issue may be subject to delay as I am once again on my travels. Although I'll probably take the laptop with me, given a choice between writing the Newsletter or drinking Guinness in an Irish bar, I'm fairly certain what I'll pick. (The Newsletter every time – I don't think!)

Until next month

Andrew Nevill (Editor)  
[nevillandrew@gmail.com](mailto:nevillandrew@gmail.com)

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## 2. THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

After all the weeks of rehearsal, it finally came down to one night as our revue of entertainment through the ages finally landed at Salford Arts Theatre.

It was a great night and everyone involved seemed to enjoy it. What made it fun for me was that we were doing something so different from what we usually do. It was

also surprisingly challenging. One moment, you're doing a silent comedy sketch, the next you're in a homage to Dad's Army and then after that you're in an Abba Medley. I've never had so many different roles or costume changes in one night. It was certainly frenetic. And I don't know how Brian does it every year for the panto.

Talking of costumes – weren't they glorious? I really loved my Flowerpot Man outfit. And I'm still finding glitter from the one I wore for Abba.

The audience also seemed to enjoy it – just a shame it was so small. The numbers I've heard say we had about thirty. It would have been nice to have more but at the same time we have played to smaller audiences.

Personally, though the best thing about that night was the reaction of Paul and Kiel Hunter, two new members who joined us for this production. It's fair to say they left the theatre that night with stars in their eyes. They had a brilliant time and signed up for the pantomime (more on that later) immediately after. It was wonderful to see that reaction, to be reminded of why we all do this, and I must say it brought back the memories of how I felt the first time I was on a stage.

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### 3. WICKED

Palace Theatre, 13 September

It's the hottest ticket in town! The acclaimed Broadway and West End show that bills itself as telling the 'untold story of the witches of Oz' has now spawned a touring production. And the first place the witches's broomstick has touched down is Manchester.

I knew tickets for this would go fast so I got mine almost as soon as they went on sale and have been waiting eagerly since then.

On Friday 13 September, the wait ended. So was it worth the wait? Is the Emerald City green?

A complaint that you hear – particularly from people who've already seen a show in London - about touring productions is that they aren't as big as the West End production.

Wicked is an exception to this with a set and production values on a par with the West End show.

Nikki Davis-Jones promoted from understudy in London to star on tour shines as Elphaba. She makes a striking Wicked Witch of the West both in voice and looks.

Emily Tierney as Glinda also makes the role her own and she uses the range and power of her beautiful soprano voice to great effect.

Individually they were great but when the two leads were on the stage together they were brilliant. My highlight of the night was their duet on 'For Good' – which I'll admit brought a lump to my throat.

The leads and the whole cast were not afraid to grab this production and make it theirs. Several numbers are arranged and sung slightly differently from the soundtrack album or the West End production. This is not a carbon copy of any previous production that is merely being staged elsewhere. This is its own show doing things its way and you have admire the producers and cast for not playing it safe.

The thing that most impressed me was the chorus. As it is a touring production, the chorus is not as big as in the West End. I think there were about 10 chorus members when they came out for the bow. Barton would kill to have that many people on stage, let alone just in the chorus, but the Palace Theatre has a huge stage and even

with about 15 people (say the ensemble and 5 main cast during a show number) the stage could still have looked slightly empty. It never did. Not for one second. The chorus – and indeed the whole cast – performing with such energy that there was always movement, always something happening so that the stage always seemed full of life.

Wicked runs until 16 November at the Palace Theatre. However, tickets are very limited. Your best chance is check the website or visit the box office to see if they have any singles or returns.

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#### 4. BABES IN THE WOOD

We don't waste any time here at Barton. We performed 'That's Entertainment' on Saturday and the Monday after we were having the first read of the script for this year's pantomime

It's Babes in the Woods. Elaine McCann has (almost) written the script moving the action from Sherwood Forest to Worsley Woods (well, it's less travelling and a tree in Nottingham looks the same as one in Salford, right?)

The nasty sheriff Sir Simon (who bears a passing similarity to a certain pop mogul) is trying to fix the local talent show. Oh, and he has a pesky niece and nephew he'd like to 'lose'

Will his evil plan work or can Robin Hood, Maid Marion and Urse the Nurse foil his scheme and save the children?

The reading went exceptionally well. Not only is it a marvellous script but everyone read the parts they were given so well that

the pantomime cast itself. Those who read the parts got the part.

I must admit to being really very pleased about this. The part I read was the villain! I am already growing the goatee and looking for something in black.

So far we're only five rehearsals in and we've mostly been reading through the script. However the hard work has begun and we've started doing some basic blocking.

There are still some parts that aren't cast – and panto is always flexible anyway. So if you'd like to take part come down to Smith's and we'd be happy to see you.

Babes In The Wood rehearses Mondays and Thursday from 7:45pm at Smiths. It is performed from 5 – 8 December at Salford Arts Theatre. Tickets are available now. Booking details can be found in Dates For Your Diary

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#### 5. QUIZ

As I'm quite pleased at being cast as the villain in our pantomime, I've come up with an Evil Quiz this month. The following are quotes from famous villains

from various Shakespeare plays and from the movies.

Do you know who said each line and in what play or movie?

Answers as always at the end of the newsletter.

1. I am determined to prove a villain
2. Why so serious?
3. It must not be denied, but I am a plain-dealing villain
4. Everything that has transpired has done so according to my design.
5. And what's he then that says I play the villain?
6. Why do you say this to me when I you know I will kill you for it?
7. The villainy you teach me I will execute; and it shall go hard for I shall better the instruction.
8. ...And call off Christmas



## 6. NEWS

### ECCLES FARMERS MARKET

Members of Barton had a brilliant morning promoting the Pantomime and trying to recruit some new members at a stall at Eccles Farmers Market.

The Farmer's Market run on the third Saturday of each month is extremely popular and it seemed an ideal opportunity.

Dressed in costume several members handed out flyers for Babes In The Wood and for our Open Day on 6 October in an effort to try and recruit some new faces.

It seemed to go well. We spoke to many people, several of whom were happy to chat about their own experiences in the theatre, many of whom seemed amenable to the idea of joining us. One measure of the success is that we ran out of the recruitment/open day leaflets. Another is that already as a direct result of that morning we had two new people turn up at rehearsal. Hopefully there will be more.

### OPEN AFTERNOON

We are holding an open afternoon at Smiths as part of our attempts to get new members.

There will be a range of activities showcasing various aspects of putting on a show. This will include tours of our new costume room, hair and make-up displays and photos from past productions. And of course, our friendly members will be around and happy to talk to people and answer questions.

The Open Afternoon takes place from 2-4pm on 6 October. If you know anyone who might like to join us, please encourage them to come along. And why not come along yourself?

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

We've been invited to take part in two community events.

The first is a Halloween evening at Winton Park on Saturday 26 October from 6-8pm. The idea is that visitors will walk around the park where they will encounter various Halloween themed scenes such as witches around a cauldron, the witches from Macbeth etc. It should be fun – and just a little bit scary.

Secondly, the Eccles Rotary Club have asked us once again to help them with the Christmas Launch. This year it's on 16 November at the Eccles Shopping Centre.

Hey, you lot. Come back here! Why are you all running away? It can't go wrong again! Can it?

## SALFORD ARTS THEATRE

Some good news from the Theatre. The roof is finally finished. And the new sign is up. For the curious Roni has posted a photo on her Twitter account ([https://twitter.com/SalfordArts/status/385461911321468928/photo/1?utm\\_source=fb&utm\\_medium=fb&utm\\_campaign=SalfordArts&utm\\_content=385461911321468928](https://twitter.com/SalfordArts/status/385461911321468928/photo/1?utm_source=fb&utm_medium=fb&utm_campaign=SalfordArts&utm_content=385461911321468928))

Finally, just a reminder about the planning application for a car park at the theatre on Salford Council's website.

Roni & Scott would be very grateful if people could add positive comments supporting the application. The deadline for these is 18 October 2013.

You can submit your comment online at <http://publicaccess.salford.gov.uk/publicaccess/> -search on 'theatre' and get a list of applications including 13/63592/FUL. (You will need to register.)

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## 7. MISS JULIE

By August Strindberg, adapted by Rob Johnston  
Smith's Restaurant, 26 September 2013

In this new adaptation of Strindberg's play, which premiered on Wednesday and Thursday at Smiths in Eccles, the action has been translated to a stately home in the North in 1951.

The title character is the daughter of a duke who is drawn to her father's valet, John, whom she seduces (or who allows himself to be seduced). What begins as a flirtation ends up as a power game between the two until John convinces Miss Julie to take drastic action to escape her predicament. (Having ruined her reputation by sleeping with a servant)

Miss Julie, played by Susie Milne, was obviously trouble as soon she walked on the stage in a red dress, perfectly manicured red nails and red lipstick. She was strong willed, imperious and in control. But as the play progressed it became clear that this was just a façade and Milne portrayed the cracking façade and the gradual revelation of a capricious, confused and ultimately damaged young woman convincingly

John, performed by Adam Urey, was by turns kind and callous, ambitious and servile, and always manipulative. It's not easy playing a character who switches back and forth like that but Urey coped admirably

Kate Mitchell as Christine, the cook was sympathetic and likeable. That might seem as if I'm damning with faint praise. I'm not. The two main characters were thoroughly unlikeable and we were watching their story. It seemed to me that Christine was the audience's viewpoint, the character that could pass comment on the action as she was caught in the middle just like the audience.

And that's just what it felt like. The small performance space was incredibly intimate, almost as if you were like Christine, sat in the scullery watching it unfold before you. It was compelling and engrossing and the audience were inexorably drawn in. At one point, a pet bird is killed and although you didn't see anything and although you knew it was just a play, several audience members couldn't help but avert their eyes from the grisly scene. Nor could they help but to look back again. It was like watching a car crash –you know it's going to end badly but you have to stay to see just how bad.

This wasn't a play that left you feeling entertained and having had a cracking good time. This was one that made you go

away pensive and talking about it afterwards with your fellow audience members. But often those plays are the ones that stay with you.

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## 8. DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Barton Theatre Company:

**Pantomime: The Babes in the Woods**

*Rehearsals:* Monday & Thursday, 7:45pm,  
First Floor, Smith's Restaurant, 1-3  
Church Road, Eccles, M30 ODL  
*Performance:* 5-8 December 2013.  
7:30pm (Thurs-Sat), 2:00pm (Sat & Sun),  
Salford Arts Theatre. Tickets: £7.50, £6.00  
(Concessions), £25.00 (Family)

Salford Arts Theatre  
Kemsing Walk  
Off Liverpool Street  
Salford  
M5 4BS

*Bookings:* 0161 707 5941 (Box Office)  
0161 925 0111 (Theatre)  
[www.salfordartstheatre.com/whatson](http://www.salfordartstheatre.com/whatson)  
(Online card bookings)

### **Open Day**

Sunday 6 October 2013, 2-4pm, First  
Floor, Smiths Restaurant, 1-3 Church  
Road, Eccles, M30 ODL

Salford Arts Theatre

**Macbeth:** 6-7 November 2013. 7:30pm  
Tickets: £7.00, £6.00 (Concession)

**Cinderella** by James Barry: 12-24  
December 2013, 2pm, 7pm  
Tickets £7.00, £6.00 (Concession), £26.00  
(Family)

Salford Arts Theatre  
Kemsing Walk  
Off Liverpool Street  
Salford  
M5 4BS

*Bookings:* 0161 925 0111

[www.salfordartstheatre.com/whatson](http://www.salfordartstheatre.com/whatson)  
(Online card bookings)

The Lowry

*Listings:*

<http://www.thelowry.com/events/theatre-shows>

The Lowry

Pier 8  
Salford Quays  
M50 3AZ

*Bookings:* Tel: 0843 208 6000

Fax: 0161 876 2001

Email: [info@thelowry.com](mailto:info@thelowry.com)

Web:

<https://tickets.thelowry.com/Online/default.asp>

Palace Theatre:

**Wicked:** 12 September – 16 November  
2013, 7:30pm 2:30pm (Wed & Sat)  
Tickets: £20.00-£75.00

Palace Theatre  
97 Oxford Street  
Manchester  
M1 6FT

Opera House

*Listings:*

<http://www.atgtickets.com/venues/opera-house-manchester/>

Opera House  
3 Quay Street  
Manchester  
M3 3HP

*Bookings* (Palace & Opera House)

Palace Theatre Box Office – address above  
Web: <http://www.atgtickets.com/>

### Royal Exchange Theatre

*Listings:*

<http://www.royalexchange.co.uk/page.aspx?page=453>

Royal Exchange Theatre  
St Ann's Square

Manchester  
M2 7DH

*Bookings:* In person at Box Office above

Tel: 0161 8339833

Fax 0161 615 6696

In person: 11.00am - 5.00pm

Email: [box.office@royalexchange.co.uk](mailto:box.office@royalexchange.co.uk)

Web:

[www.royalexchange.co.uk/bookonline](http://www.royalexchange.co.uk/bookonline)

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## 9. THE FINAL CURTAIN

That's all for this edition of Footlights. We will be back again next month.

**Thank You:** and Elaine Hayton for proof reading and contributing to the News.

**Back Issues:** Terry maintains an archive of back issues on our website: <http://www.bartontheatre.co.uk/footlights.html>

**Contributions:** Always welcome. Please submit any contributions to the email address below. You will receive full blame credit for anything used in the newsletter.

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### **Quiz Answers:**

1. Richard (III) of Gloucester – Richard III

2. The Joker – The Dark Knight
3. Don John – Much Ado About Nothing
4. Emperor Palpatine – Star Wars: Return of the Jedi
5. Iago – Othello
6. General Zod – Superman II
7. Shylock – The Merchant of Venice.
8. Sheriff of Nottingham – Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves

### **Contact Information:**

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### **Barton Theatre Company Committee**

*Chair:* Brian Cogswill, *Treasurer:* Elaine Hayton, *Secretary:* Andrew Nevill  
*Officers:* Joan Breen, David Milne, Mags Ridings, Val Ridings, Cathy Warburton

Web: <http://www.bartontheatre.co.uk>

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