We are very sorry to announce that *Why Me?* has had to be withdrawn. Please see our website for news of a replacement production, to be directed by Delyse Rostron, from 4 to 11 May. Next up, White Cobra’s, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* comes to our stage for one night only on 23rd March and *Little Gem* will be performed in the Salisbury Studio in early April. Auditions are also just around the corner for our final play of the season, *Mindgame*, by arguably one of the best mystery writers in modern times- Anthony Horowitz. Read on to find out more about how you can be a part of this intriguing production...

Mark Styler is a published true crime writer. His subject is serial killers and he has finally managed to get an interview with famed killer, Easterman.

Styler is kept waiting for nearly 2 hours before Dr Farquhar, the director of Fairfields Secure Psychiatric Hospital, arrives and starts to encourage Styler to leave. Nurse Paisley confirms Styler’s suspicions; Fairfields is not safe and now he is trapped, wearing a strait jacket and at the hands of Dr Farquhar, one of the more dangerous inmates at the hospital.

This Anthony Horowitz (*Poirot, Midsomer Murders, Foyle’s War*) play is a psychological thriller, with a series of twists and turns, complemented by dark comedy.

Contains strong language, depictions of violence and characters smoking on stage (smoke-free cigarettes).

I want to keep an open mind as to cast - the roles are defined as 2 males and 1 female, but I feel that this is not necessarily required and so could work with any combination.

**Dr Farquhar** needs to have the gravitas to be believable as a Director of a secure psychiatric hospital. He is rakish in appearance and is
described as Holmes and Watson combined. Age 30-50.

**Styler** is a stylish crime writer (spoiler) but doesn't stay that way. Age 30-50.

**Nurse Paisley** has to have a similar gravitas to Dr Farquhar. Age 30-50.

**Mark Townend** (Director)

**Key Dates:**

- **Reading:** Tuesday 26th March at 8:00pm
- **Auditions:** Thursday 28th March from 7:30pm
- **Production Week:** 29th June - 6th July 2019

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**The Miser by Molière, translated by Freyda Thomas, reviewed here by Anne Morin**

On Saturday 19th January, some friends and I saw *The Miser* by Molière at Chester Little Theatre. Being French myself, I studied Molière’s plays at school, in the same way that Shakespeare is studied in the UK. My neighbour (Jane Barth) thought it would be interesting to have this English production reviewed by someone exposed to the original Molière, so what follows are my two sous’ worth of thoughts about Chester’s version of this French classic.

Molière holds a very special place in France’s love affair with theatre classics, by introducing a new genre: the Comedy of Manners. In an era when Tragedy was thought to be the highest dramatic form, Molière raised the curtain on Comedy by using traditional farce, stirring in a pinch of drama, a spoonful of witty social satire and ounces of sparkly burlesque. Molière’s spotlight fell on human faults (such as greed and the love of money), denouncing bourgeois social practices and bringing to the stage issues of everyday French society.

In *The Miser*, Molière’s greatness surely lies in his talented use of ridicule and brilliant build-up of misunderstandings, until the penny finally drops. Even Voltaire, famous philosopher of the Enlightenment and admittedly one of the ‘unfunniest’ writers ever, did approve of *L’Avare*’s prose by claiming that “the public needs marked features, strong ridicules and passionate impertinencies”. Meanwhile, Goethe stated that “*The Miser*, in which vice destroys all the piety that unites father and son, has an extraordinary greatness and is to a high degree tragic”. Rousseau (the Swiss philosopher, not the tax collector) thought *L’Avare* an immoral play, considering money-lending a vice; yes, but surely not as bad as the son’s insolence towards his stingy father!

Freyda Thomas’s English version of *The Miser* is actually pretty truthful to the original plot, even to the core of some of the highlights: Harpagon’s sheer apoplexy and unbounded despair at the theft of his money was one of those moments that did not disappoint (merci, John Turner!). Cléante’s love declaration to Marianne under his father’s nose and Valère’s failed manipulative attempts at changing Harpagon’s mind over his daughter’s marriage, maintained the original cleverly twisted intentions (chapeaux/hats off, Messieurs!). The ladies’ assertive resistance against the Miser showed some genuine girl power and gave credit to Molière’s “feminist sympathies” (champagne, Mesdemoiselles!). Very interestingly, the whole play also adapted the comical aspects (mimics, ample gestures, caricature of personality traits, twists and turnarounds and social satire) to appeal to a
very British sense of humour: by (tenderly) taking the mickey out of continental Europeans. Chef extraordinaire Maitre Jacques’s twirling and unabated love of food was so passionately played that he would put to shame any French cook. Inspector Sansclou’s detective work was impeccably Clouseau-esque, Señor Anselme and Valère’s three-line-long family name was breathtakingly pronounced, and the German “Nein, nein, nein!” said it all.

Finally, the play did highlight some contemporary British social realities: “the economic downturn” was mentioned a few times, and Harpagon’s heartfelt plea to “give me back my money!” would have made Margaret T. and Theresa M. very proud.

Anne Morin

The Miser is a stylish crime writer (spoiler) but needs marked features, strong ridicules and phrasing, verbal jousting and pages-long cases turnarounds and social satire) to appeal to a caricature of personality traits, twists and sympathies” (champagne, Mesdemoiselles!). The ladies’ assertive resistance cleverly twisted intentions (chapeaux/hats off, Messieurs!). The ladies’ assertive resistance cleverly twisted intentions (chapeaux/hats off, Messieurs!). The ladies’ assertive resistance cleverly twisted intentions (chapeaux/hats off, Messieurs!).

Those of you who enjoyed Chester Little Theatre’s 2017 production of The Cripple of Inishmaan will know of McDonagh’s ability to tug at your heart strings while at the same time making you laugh out loud at people’s careless and bizarre behaviour.

The White Cobra company is skilled at bringing funny and moving moments to the stage. Their last play here was Duets and before that, Glorious – the True Story of Florence Foster Jenkins, both by Peter Quilter. Another opportunity coming up to see White Cobra in action, but just for one night – Saturday 23rd March (7:30pm) - so book your tickets early!

Tickets £11 and £10 concessions. Book online at www.chesterlittletheatre.co.uk or telephone TicketSource 0333 666 3366 (booking charges apply).
DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

March
Sat 23rd at 7:30pm  The Beauty Queen of Leenane by White Cobra Productions

April
11th-13th at 7:30pm  Little Gem in the Salisbury Studio, directed by John Turner

May
4th-11th at 7:30pm  Replacement for Why Me? to be directed by Delyse Rostron

★Other Opportunities★

Are you handy with tools?
Enjoy coming to the theatre?
Have a little spare time?
Perhaps you’d like to join our Set Building Team!
Creative, practical, essential for our productions.
For more information, contact info@chesterlittletheatre.co.uk
CHESTER LITTLE THEATRE
Advance Booking Form (full members and supporters only)

Name.................................................................................................................................

Address................................................................................................................................

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Telephone Number.................................................Mobile................................................

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The Beauty Queen of Leenane by Martin McDonagh

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Play to replace Why Me? by Stanley Price

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Ticket confirmation by email is free. For confirmation by post please add £1

Cheques enclosed for £........................... payable to: Chester Little Theatre.
Send to: The Box Office, The Little Theatre, Gloucester Street, Chester CH1 3HR

Other ways to book: by phone: TicketSource on 0333 666 3366. Monday to Friday, 9:00 am to 8:00 pm and Saturday, 9:00 am to 6:00 pm. Pay by Credit or Debit card. Booking Fees and Postal Charges apply.

Website: www.chestertheatreclub.co.uk, click on Booking. Pay by debit or credit card. Booking Fees apply.