

The Manifest Theatre - Looking forward to 2021

Due to continuing restrictions affecting everyone in the arts sector we have been unable to carry out many of our plans for this year. However, we have managed to maintain the fabric of the theatre and it will be ready to open as soon as it is safe to do so. Of course this may not be for some time and alas, certainly not before the end of this year.

The officers and members of your committee are still meeting regularly, albeit via internet meetings rather than in person, to manage the necessary administrative tasks and make tentative plans for future productions so we may move forward as soon as we are able to do so.

Despite the increasing fears that some arts venues will not survive the current crisis, we can continue to assure you that the future of the Manifest Theatre is still safe. The building is owned by the group, so we have no mortgage worries and with very few overheads, our financial reserves are sufficient to carry us through to 2021 and beyond should the need arise.

Of course, we do hope to be inviting you all back next year and that we will be able to begin rehearsals again in the spring. This being the case, our first production will be in late spring 2021.

As we were unable to hold an Annual General Meeting this year, we hope it will be possible to bring next year's AGM forward to early spring. The date will be announced when finalised. The officers and committee elected in 2019 will continue in their current positions until we are able to safely hold an AGM.

Our main priority continues to be the health and safety of all our members. During these difficult times, we hope you are all staying safe and well.

Our Next Production

Despite the ongoing restrictions we are doing our best to be optimistic for the coming year based on the recent news that a vaccine for the Covid-19 virus is soon to be made available. So, health restrictions permitting, our first production of 2021 will be:

The Thrill of Love

By Amanda Whittington

Provisional dates: 7th to 12th June 2021.

A dramatised account of the true story of Ruth Ellis, who was a hostess in the West End 'gentlemen's clubs'. She worked hard, played hard and dreamt of a movie-star life. Yet in 1955, the self-styled 'blonde bombshell' was convicted of murder and became the last woman to be hanged in Great Britain.

Once we are able to, we will announce details for the opening of the box office.

2021 MEMBERSHIPS

Just a reminder of our previous newsletter item as published in July this year. Due to the disruption of our activities this year, all 2020 paid up members will be able to enjoy the benefit of free membership in 2021.

MANIFEST JUNIOR AND YOUTH GROUPS

Sadly our Junior/Youth Group meetings are still suspended too. We're sure all you young members have been missing these sessions and we hope to be able to welcome you back soon.

THE REST OF NEXT YEAR

Continuing with optimism, we are planning at least one further production for 2021. Again, this is a play by Amanda Whittington but in contrast, this one is a comedy. Those of you who saw our production of Ladies' Day in 2019 will be pleased to hear we will be staging the sequel:

Ladies' Day DOWN UNDER

Provisional dates: 18th to 23rd October 2021.

After hitting the jackpot at Ladies' Day in York, the fish-filleting foursome; Pearl, Jan, Shelley and Linda are back again. This time they are celebrating in style with the trip of a lifetime to the land of Oz.

NORTH ESSEX THEATRE GUILD AWARDS

At this years NETG Awards we were pleased to receive the following awards. I am sure you will agree they were all very well deserved.

Santa Goes on Holiday - Directed by Kerry King

King Costume Award to our wardrobe mangers.

Sherlock Holmes and the Seven Wooden Figurines - Directed by Lea Friend

The Millenium Writers Award to Tom Hitchcock for Best Original Script.

Of Mice and Men - Directed by Alison Baker

The Jimmy James Memorial Award to Alison Baker for producing and directing the play.