

FOLLIES

book by James Goldman
music & lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Sondheim's
Legendary
Broadway
Sensation!

Winner of
7
Tony Awards!

 Gallery Players
present

FOLLIES

Book by JAMES GOLDMAN
Music & lyrics by STEPHEN SONDHEIM

Produced originally on Broadway by Harold Prince
By special arrangement with Cameron Mackintosh

July 14 - 18

THE NEW WOLSEY
THEATRE IPSWICH

Box Office 01473 295900

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with JOSEF WEINBERGER LIMITED on behalf of MUSIC THEATRE INTERNATIONAL of NEW YORK.

 Gallery
Players
present

The Long Road

by Shelagh Stephenson



March 2009
Sir John Mills Theatre
Gatacre Road, Ipswich

Foreword

This play was written to be performed in prisons as well as theatres, and so I chose to write it in a particular heightened style, in which the audience is often addressed directly.

Much of the background understanding came from visits to prisons where, with people from *The Forgiveness Project*, we talked through notions of forgiveness and restorative justice with prisoners. Like most people I had little prior knowledge of the prison system - well, none, to be precise. But I came to realise that almost all the people I met inside had been profoundly damaged, long before they ended up in jail.

We all know this at the back of our brains but the reality of it is quite shocking.

None of the prisoners I met came from an even vaguely stable background: they were all bred from a chaotic and toxic mixture of familial neglect, criminality, and varying degrees of violence. Many of them had spent large portions of their adult lives in jail, and many of them moved me profoundly as they struggled to acknowledge and understand the effects of their crimes.

They also made me laugh, and being the sort of playwright that I am, this was something of a relief.

I dedicate the play to all those prisoners taking their first faltering steps towards redemption and understanding, and all those victims who choose to meet them on the road.

Shelagh Stephenson

Playwright **Shelagh Stephenson** was born in Northumberland and read drama at Manchester University. She is the author of several original radio plays written for BBC Radio, including *Darling Peidi*, *The Anatomical Venus* and *Five Kinds of Silence* (1997), which won the Writer's Guild Award (Best Original Radio Play). Recent plays include *Life is a Dream* and *Nemesis*, broadcast in 2004 and 2005 respectively.

Her first stage play, *The Memory of Water* (1997), which opened at the Hampstead Theatre, London in 1996, won the *Laurence Olivier Award for Best Comedy*. This was adapted for film, and produced as *Before You Go* in 2002, starring Julie Walters. Her second stage play, *An Experiment With An Air Pump* (1998), was joint winner of the 1997 Peggy Ramsay Award, and premiered at the Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester, in 1998.

Ancient Lights (2000) was produced at Hampstead Theatre in 2000, and in 2002, *Mappa Mundi* (2002) opened at the Royal National Theatre. Her latest play, *Enlightenment*, opened at Abbey Theatre, Dublin in 2005.



Past Shows:- 1985 Cowardy Custard, 1986 Happy as a Sandbag, 1987 Sail Away, 1988 Something's Afoot, 1989 Company, 1990 The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas, 1991 The Hired Man, 1992 Snoopy - The Musical, A Little Night Music, 1993 Stepping Out, Cabaret, 1994 Assassins, The Ghost Train, Into the Woods, Hobson's Choice, 1995 Man of La Mancha, Steel Magnolia's, City of Angels, Scent of Flowers, 1996 Little Shop of Horrors, The Most Happy Fella, Blue Remembered Hills, 1997 Dancing at Lughnasa, Pacific Overtures, Chicago, Hard Times, 1998 The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui, Sweeney Todd (The Demon Barber of Fleet Street), Shadowlands, Something's Afoot, 1999 Carnival, Trip to Bountiful, The Boys From Syracuse, Tons of Money, 2000 On Golden Pond, The Bakers Wife, Kiss of the Spiderwoman, A Slice of Saturday Night, One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest, 2001 Mrs Warren's Profession, A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum, Billy, Breezblock Park, 2002 The Memory of Water, Flora The Red Menace, A Slice of Saturday Night, Radio Times, 2003 Kiss Me Like You Mean It, Days of Hope, Honk!, And A Nightingale Sang, 2004 Bouncers, Merrily We Roll Along, Talking Heads, You're A Good Man Charlie Brown, 2005 Kindertransport, She Loves Me, A Night At The Dogs, 2006 Amy's View, Passion, With Love, Colder Than Here, 2007 This Happy Breed, Grand Hotel, You Want Chilli Sauce With That & Marry Me A Little, The Sunshine Boys, 2008 Oh Kay!, Spend Spend Spend, To Kill A Mockingbird, 2009 The Long Road.

Forthcoming Shows:- '*Follies*' the legendary Broadway musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Goldman, July 14th to 18th at the New Wolsey Theatre.

Soho Theatre and Writers Centre

This is the fifth play performed by Gallery Players that was first seen at the Soho Theatre in Dean Street, London.

The Soho Theatre Company is passionate in its commitment to new writing, producing a year round programme of original and accessible new plays many of them from first time playwrights.

In 2001 we performed 'Kiss Me Like You Mean It' by Chris Chibnall, which went on to win the NODA Eastern Region Councillors Cup and the ESTAA cup for Best play.

In March 2005 we performed 'Kindertransport' by Dianne Samuels which won six awards at the final ESTAAs . In November of the same year we performed 'A Night at the Dogs' by Matt Charman. Both plays were winners of the Verity Bargate Award. In 2006 we staged a production of Laura Wade's wonderfully funny and moving play 'Colder Than Here'.

The Long Road

by Shelagh Stephenson



Photos: Owen Hines - Evening Star



Friends of Gallery Players

Mrs J. Bolton
Mrs P. Curtis
Mr.Mrs. P. Holder
Margaret Morphew
Mrs. P. Osborne
Mr.Mrs Richmond-Hardy
Ms. D. Savage
Mr.Mrs Webb

Brenda Caddick
Mrs B. Dredge
Jean Harvey
Mrs. M. Morton
Dennis Pennock
Ally & Roy Riley
Mr.Mrs E. Smart
Mrs. P. White
Mr.Mrs Quelch

Mrs. D. Cornford
Paul Goymour
Mr.Mrs. P. Meredith
Mr.Mrs.C. Mudd
Philip Rawe
Mr.Mr. P. Roberts
Ms. S. Steedman
John Whitear

If you would like to help us to continue to present our shows to a high standard and, just as importantly, help to raise money to help others, perhaps you would like to become a 'Friend of the Gallery Players'. You will receive advance information and discount booking forms for all our productions, newsletters and an invitation to the VIP reception for our major musical.

To become a 'Friend', or for any information on other forms of sponsorship please contact Pat Taplin on 01394 386603

Honorary Friends:- Gary Avis,
Margaret Haddock & Michael Morton

The Long Road

by Shelagh Stephenson

Production Team

Director	Steve Wooldridge
Designer	Dave Borthwick
Lighting Design	Philip Rawe
Lighting Assistants	Clive Rich, Steve Rowe
Sound	Steve Rowe
Stage Manager	Georgie Beard
Properties	Sue Simmons
Set Construction	Dave Borthwick, Martin Leigh, Steve Wooldridge, Georgie Beard
Publicity	Steve Taplin
Programme Content	Steve Wooldridge
Front of House	Mike & Judy Wadman, Sheila Garnham, Sue Goodall, Colin & Margaret Mudd, Mick & Jean Farrow, Margaret Haddock, Don Perry, Ian Quickfall.



Acknowledgments:

James Marston, Evening Star, David Henshall, East Anglian Daily Times
Eastern Angles Theatre Company, Ipswich Central Library
Mike and Zena Steward, Station Farm, Chris Finbow, Museum Street Methodist Church
Pat Taplin for her never ending support and patience, The Buttermarket Shopping Centre
Phil Cory

An Amateur Production by permission of Samuel French Ltd.

Reflections

This has been a great play to rehearse but it has not been without its challenges. The challenge has been to try and make the play accessible without becoming morose and preachy.

When I first saw it at the Soho Theatre I was absolutely spellbound. Linda and I had just spent a few days in London catching up on some plays and musicals we wanted to see. Then on the final afternoon we went to see a matinee performance; we had missed the opportunity to see it in May when it was first performed. There was a school from Bexhill on Sea in that matinee and we thought it might be a noisy audience. We sat next to their drama teacher and chatted. She said it would have been so easy to have taken the group to see 'Hairspray' or other current hits but she wanted the group to realise that you don't need a huge commercial set and theatre for Drama to succeed in reaching out to us.

From the outset everyone was captivated. At the end the young people were buzzing about what they had seen and some were visibly moved.

When, after a bit of a struggle, I finally acquired the performance rights, I felt a strange combination of feelings; joy at being able to direct what I felt was a gem of a play but anxiety about how it might be received in the current climate of doom and gloom. I enjoy all aspects of theatre from straight plays to musical theatre and only relatively recently have I discovered what a great vehicle panto can be. We can be inspired by all kinds of drama, we can laugh, we can cry and leave the theatre with that lovely feel-good factor. How will people leave the theatre after seeing *The Long Road*? That was always at the back of my mind. In the end I decided that peoples' reactions will be what they will be. There is always a risk but that should not deter us from staging new work that may just prompt us to think about issues which face us daily. It cannot always be about escapism.

The Long Road has at its core the concept of restorative justice. I first encountered this concept while still working in a school. More recently while writing a document on anti bullying strategies for the *Suffolk Anti Bullying Strategy Group*, I researched it further. Restorative justice is becoming more frequently used in schools in the areas of behaviour management and is widely used in the criminal justice system. Some find it a controversial approach; my experience has only been a positive one.

In the final analysis I feel that there is hope in the play. I am not sure which religion it is but I do recall that one religion asserts that the meaning of life is hope and that is what I feel that this play, despite its subject matter, is really all about.... the Pritchard family finally sees a glimmer of hope that they may come to terms with the random, pointless act of violence which has so dramatically changed their lives

We dedicate our performance to all those who have suffered as a result of knife crime.

Steve Wooldridge



Photo: Owen Hines - Evening Star

UCS - BA (Hons) Performing Arts
Proudly Present

Stepping Out

By Richard Harris

May 20th to 23rd 2009 at 7.45pm
The Sir John Mills Theatre
Gatacre Road, Ipswich

As an eccentric gathering of very mixed ability tappers dance their Thursday evenings away under the leadership of Mavis, we take a kind and funny look at their lives which will make you laugh and cry - A great evening's fun and entertainment.

All the actors and technical roles are level 2 students on the UCS BA Performing Arts Course.

Director/Producer Jo Whelton Choreographer/Dance
Coach Suzi Lowe

To book tickets please call 01473
211498 or email
boxoffice@easternangles.co.uk

By kind permission of Samuel French Ltd

Knife Crime

It is difficult to obtain accurate information and statistics about knife crime. But as with all crime it is the human stories behind the statistics which are important and recently there has been a spate of programmes which have portrayed with great empathy the dreadful effects of knife crime on the families and friends of the victims. Statistics never tell the human side.

On Tuesday last week Linda I sat listening to a harrowing story on BBC Radio 2 of a seventeen year old Scottish boy named Josh Mitchell who had been the victim of a pointless stabbing. Listening to his father recount the events and the impact upon him and his family was like listening to the play. Judging from his anger and obvious distress, Andrew Mitchell, however, was clearly at was the beginning of his own long road.

The following statistics from reliable sources did surprise us...

1. Contrary to public perception, it would seem that knife crime is not on the rise in the UK and has in fact remained stable over the past decade, accounting for around 6-7% of all crime. Source: British Crime Survey 2008.

2. In 2007-08, close to one in five offences of attempted murder, grievous bodily harm or robbery (22,151 offences) involved knives or sharp instruments. Source: Home Office.

3. Weapons were used in a quarter (24%) of violent crimes in 2007-08; hitting implements were used in 7%, knives in 6%, glasses/bottles in 4% and firearms in 1% of incidents. Source: British Crime Survey 2008.

Young People and Knife Crime

1. Nearly a third of children in the UK have been affected by gun and knife crime. Source: NCH/Action for Children 2008.

2. One in five 16 year-old boys admits to having attacked someone and intended to hurt them seriously with a knife. Source: National Youth Agency 2006.

3. 63% of young people surveyed believe image is directly linked to gun and knife crime; 61% think gun and knife crime is about revenge and reprisals; and 63% believe peer pressure is a main reason for gun and knife crime. Source: NCH/Action for Children 2008.

4. The most commonly given reason for carrying a knife is 'for protection'. Other reasons include 'in case there's a fight' and 'for use in crimes': Source: Offending, Crime and Justice Survey 2005.



Photos: Owen Hines - Evening Star

Cast (in order of appearance)

Joe **Josh Keeble**

Mary **Linda Bailey**

John **Martin Leigh**

Emma Price **Maria Louis**

Elizabeth **Lindsay Ashford**



The action alternates between the Pritchard household and an interview room in a prison

There will be a short interval during which refreshments will be served in the Bill Carver lounge

Restorative Justice

Based on concepts rooted in ancient Maori and Pacific Islander tradition, *Restorative Justice* is internationally admired and is being emulated by a number of countries as well as Britain.

At its core lies the concept of a caring inclusive community. With restorative practice everyone is encouraged to be accountable for the impact of their actions on others. Accountability means being able to take responsibility for those actions, being prepared to apologise and make amends and learning to do things differently another time. The emphasis is on repairing the harm done and rebuilding relationships. It is not about punishment.

The modern justice system is offender-focused. It is preoccupied with proving guilt and punishing the culprit. Questions such as victims' rights are extraneous. Restorative justice is victim-centred. It recognises that when a crime has been committed, the main problem is that someone has been hurt. The priority is to heal the harm that has been caused, by putting the victim at the centre of the process, allowing them their voice in the process and involving them in the decisions made.

Restorative justice does not ask 'how do we punish?', but instead asks 'how do we get the person to take responsibility for what they have done?' Paying a fine, doing periodic detention or even going to prison are easy options for many people. They are all ways that offenders can avoid taking responsibility, because in this way they never have to face the human reality of what they have done.

Critics claim it is a soft option offering the opportunity for a criminal to say sorry to their victim and avoid harsher punishments. The Government says that the schemes have the potential to deliver "faster, more cost effective justice" and hopes it will have an effect on the rising prison population.

Linda Bailey – Mary

I love the rehearsal time and always want it to be fun no matter how serious the piece. I'd like to thank my wonderful fellow cast members for indulging my need to laugh! *The Long Road* is a very serious piece but rehearsals have been a joy. Watching Josh and Maria our two 'youngies' turn in performances that are mesmeric and mature beyond their years has been a delight.

In some ways Mary has been the easiest character I have had to play because I haven't had to imagine being a mother with two sons, I am a mother with two sons. That is where the easy bit ends because just the thought of losing one is abhorrent to me. Playing Mary has been a harrowing experience at times, leaving me worrying about my own precious boys and I have struggled with some of the aspects of grief. John and Mary all but ignore their other son's grief and barely recognise his despair and guilt at being the one who was there when it happened. As a mother that is difficult to comprehend. I could not imagine being blind to either of my sons suffering but I have witnessed grief and I know that it can be all consuming and unbelievably selfish.

Yet Mary does find courage and a way to reconnect with both life and her son Joe. She tries to understand and forgive the unforgivable. Without this she, and I, know life would be hopeless and that's what the play leaves us with. A long road? Absolutely, but always with hope.

Maria Louis – Emma

It seems more than a 'long road' as I force myself to remember the beginning: the audition. I remember the restlessness of the night before; a dry throat, a thundering heart and moist hands, the script trembled so violently I was straining to read the words.

Then I was told I had the part. I couldn't quite believe it.. I am so grateful for having been given the opportunity; this has been by far the most rewarding production I have ever been part of.

What I found most interesting was the freedom of direction; at first it was difficult to understand the character objective. Steve would say 'How do you feel?', 'How would Emma respond to this?' He shows the pathway. At first I found this difficult as my experience with other directors has been narrow, 'move here', 'speak now', 'Maria, are you listening?' So it was fantastic to experience such a fresh outlook and the director's interpretation.

Emma has been a challenging character to portray; she is complex yet fascinating and it has been difficult at times. The explicit language was a problem; the fact that our rehearsals take place at a church does not help either! Not only has the direction been more than a useful experience but it has been superb to see the way the cast collaborate and make suggestions. The rehearsal period has been so exciting. I look forward to each rehearsal; soaking up advice has been a priority. I feel what I have learnt I can take away with me, especially as the next few years of my life will unravel in London at the 'Academy of Live and Recorded Arts'

The Long Road

by Shelagh Stephenson

Martin Leigh – John

I must admit to feeling nervous when Steve asked me to play John. "It's pretty powerful stuff and not a bundle of laughs", he said. The prospect of slapping Linda proved too great an opportunity to miss though and actually, rehearsals have been great fun. My initial nervousness was replaced with delight at working on a piece that, although addressing very serious and challenging issues without pulling any punches, is beautifully written and yes, there are indeed laughs carefully interwoven into the narrative.

As a father with children around the ages of John's, getting into the character in the circumstances depicted in the play is uncomfortable at times you know you have to imagine yourself in the situation but are also very happy to step away from it at the end of the evening. Only such a thoughtful and painstaking director as Steve could do justice to this process and I am very grateful for his guidance on John's journey. I am grateful also to my fellow actors, a terrific blend of experience and youthful energy. It has been a richly rewarding 'Road'.

Lindsay Ashford – Elizabeth

When Steve asked if I would play Elizabeth it could really have been any part as I was delighted to have the chance to work with him. I also knew how Linda and Steve felt about the play when they had seen it in London.

There was an immediate familiarity in Elizabeth for me as I have worked in the midst of Social Services. I was very keen for Elizabeth not to be too stereotyped and Shelagh Stephenson has written her well so she does have intelligence and a reality about her. Although at times she is clearly a device to reveal the character and emotions of Emma and Mary, she has been a joy to get to know. I shall treasure this week working in the company of such talent.

Josh Keeble – Joe

When I was told that I had the part of Joe, I was both thrilled and nervous. Thrilled at the idea of being able to perform with the Gallery Players and do what I love best, and nervous as this is my first play outside of school.

Joe's journey is different from his parents'; in Joe's words, less dramatic.

Joe tends to hold his emotions inside. His biggest problem is guilt and although he knows he is not to blame, his parents' reactions and his own feelings make it difficult to come to terms with. I think this might be why he decides to go with his mum to meet Emma Price.

It has been an exciting experience watching the story unfold as it takes both audience and actor through a range of real emotions. It has also been a great experience to work with such brilliant people and under the fantastic direction of Steve. I am now very much looking forward to the performances.