

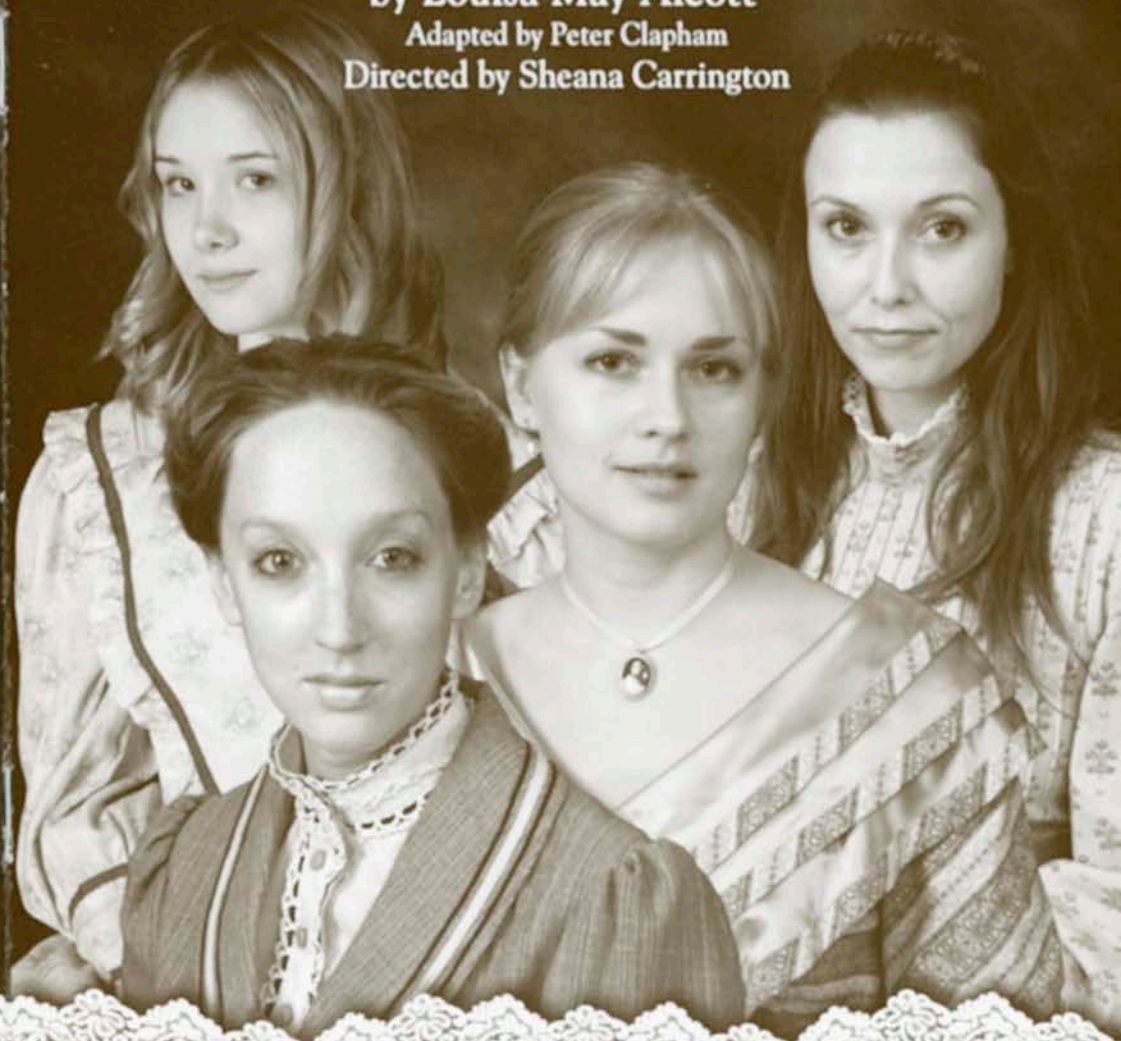
The Maskers Theatre Company presents

LITTLE WOMEN

by Louisa May Alcott

Adapted by Peter Clapham

Directed by Sheana Carrington



www.maskers.org.uk

Registered charity no. 900067

NUFFIELD THEATRE Southampton
Tuesday 27 - Saturday 31 January 2009 at 7.30pm

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

'Little Women' was always a favourite of mine, reading and re-reading the story throughout my early years. I discovered that in America 'Little Women' and 'Good Wives' are always read or performed together, whilst in the UK they are separate books. There were two other books to follow - 'Little Men' and 'Jo's Boys' (my favourite - a real 'weepee' in which Jo runs an orphanage for wayward boys).

Louisa May Alcott based the story on her own early life and that of her sisters. She was an aspiring writer and composed plays for herself and her sisters to act in. 'The Witch's Curse' included in 'Little Women' was first performed by the Alcott sisters!

I realise that for some the story is too sentimental for their taste, but the fact remains that it continues to enchant successive generations of devotees.

An American 1860s Christmas

Over the last couple of months during rehearsals, I have been asked if the Americans had Christmas trees in the 1860s, and if so, what were they decorated with. For those who are keen to know - in the Cody's Magazine publication in 1850 an article and illustration depicting the British Royal Family celebrating around the Christmas tree is generally seen as a seminal event in the ultimate American adoption of this German custom (Prince Albert of course was German). Successive waves of German immigrants seeking to recreate a bit of his homeland in his new surroundings were responsible for the decorated tree. It was so established, that a 'German tree' was placed at the White House by President Franklin Pierce in 1856. Traditionally the Germans always put their tree on a table and decorations for the Christmas tree were usually edible - chains of popcorn, biscuits etc. Later, in the mid-1860s, Germany would change that fashion due to the popularity of glass blowing, which expanded to include delicate ornaments and baubles.

The German settlers in Pennsylvania decorated trees and the custom of 'trimming the tree' spread rapidly throughout the world. I have decided that our Christmas tree is to be trimmed with edible treats and glass baubles and beads, and the star is definitely homemade! I like to think that Amy, being the artistic one, would have made this.

Sheana Carrington



THE LIFE OF LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

Louisa was born in Germantown, Pennsylvania on November 29th 1832. It is an interesting fact in connection with her life and death that Miss Alcott and her father were born on the same day of the month and that they died within 24 hours of one another.

The parents of Louisa moved to Boston when she was two years old and she made her home around that area. She was educated as a schoolteacher under the tutelage of her father, and Henry Thoreau, a transcendentalist philosopher. Louisa was 16 when she began to teach in a private school - but she was not happy and preferred to write sketches and short stories.



When the Civil War broke out Louisa was one of the army of noble women who went to the front to engage in service as a nurse, but was obliged to give up hospital work after contracting typhoid fever. Recovering from this she then made a trip to Europe, accompanying an invalid friend. A year later, in 1868, on her return to the family home, 'Orchard House' in Concord, she wrote 'Little Women', the tale of a year in the life of a New England family. She had woven so much of her own earlier life, and that of her family - everyone with the exception of Aunt March, had a prototype - that fact and fiction grew firmly together to create a domestic novel, which went far beyond its setting. It became a resounding success. She was feted in fashionable drawing rooms. From childhood, she was always an enthusiastic amateur actress, and was a constant theatregoer. It must have been thrilling for her to meet Ellen Terry and also a very young Oscar Wilde whilst in New York.

Louisa never married, but continued to look after her father. She died on March 7th 1888.

CAST

Amy March.....	Angharad Price
Beth March.....	Joanna Russel
Jo March.....	Ruth Kibble
Meg March	Eleanor Marsden
Hannah	Hazel Burrows
Mrs March (Marmee).....	Maria Head
Aunt March.....	Ros Liddiard
Laurie	Lewis Brunt
Mr. Lawrence.....	John Souter
Mr. March	Ian Wilson
Mr. Brook.....	Michael J.S. Mears



The 'Little Women'

The action of the play passes in the parlour of the home of the March family on the outskirts of Concord, a small town in Massachusetts, New England, in the 1860s, during the American Civil War.

Act I	Scene 1:	A few days before Christmas - late afternoon
	Scene 2:	New Year's Eve - early evening
	Scene 3:	The following afternoon
Act II	Scene 1:	The following summer - late afternoon
	Scene 2:	The following day

There will be one interval of 15 minutes

Act III	Scene 1:	November - a Sunday morning
	Scene 2:	Ten days later - late evening
	Scene 3:	Christmas Day - noon

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director.....	Sheana Carrington
Production Manager.....	Ken Hann
Stage Manager.....	Ken Spencer
Set Design	Ken Spencer, John Hamon
Wardrobe	Serena Brown assisted by Susan Wilson
Lighting Designer	Clive Weeks
Lighting operators	Jamie McCarthy, Mark Harvey
Sound Recordist	Geoff Grandy
Sound Operator.....	Stuart Gray
Properties.....	Ella Lockett, Gill Buchanan
Assistant Stage Managers.....	Liz Hill, Alison Tebbutt, Geoff and Pam Cook
Set Dressing	Adam Taussik, Sarah Russell
Drapes.....	Sophie Carrington
Set Construction.....	Roger Lockett, Graham Buchanan
Marketing and publicity	Angela Stansbridge, Pam & Geoff Cook, Geoff Wharam, Sarah Russell
Publicity Design	John Hamon
Programme Coordinator	Sandy White
Photography.....	Clive Weeks
FOH Coordinator	Pete Hill
FOH Display.....	Paula Beattie
Transport	Roger Lockett
Other backstage and FOH duties.....	Members of the Company
Box Office and Catering	The Nuffield Theatre

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Amber Antiques, Anna Chalk, Bristol Costume Services, Bryant Pianos, Gill Buchanan, Haskins Garden Centre, Jean Orba, Philip and Pam de Grouchy, Pitters Self Drive Ltd, Tony Bull, The Wig Room Basingstoke. Jo Burnaby from The Chesil Theatre of Winchester, The Technical Team of the Nuffield Theatre.

Sophie Carrington's Curtains & Soft Furnishings.
A professional finish at competitive prices.

Free quotation, design advice - tel. 023 80 510959

Email sophiescurtains@googlemail.com

Drapes designed and made for 'Little Women'

FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS

Monday 11th - Saturday 16th May 2009

The Woman who cooked her Husband

- by Debbie Isitt

The Maskers Studio, Emsworth Road, Shirley, Southampton, SO15 3LX

Box Office: 023 80 551489



Wednesday 15th - Saturday 25th July 2009

Tom Jones

- Henry Fielding's 18th century romp

In the open air at Hamptworth Lodge, Landford, near Romsey.

Hamptworth Lodge is a stunning Jacobean-style house

just 4 miles from junction 2 of the M27.

Box Office - tel: 023 80 711818

Tickets available from 1st April 2009



January 2010

The Crucible

by Arthur Miller

The Nuffield Theatre, Southampton



Little Women in rehearsal at the Maskers Studio



Win a pair of FREE tickets to see *Tom Jones* by Henry Fielding,
in the open air at Hamptworth Lodge in July 2009.

Complete this slip and pop it in the box in the foyer.

A wonderful evening at Hamptworth Lodge could be yours!!



Please add me to your database, send me details of forthcoming productions and enter me in the prize draw. Winners will be notified by 1st June 2009.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Email

I am interested in becoming: Full Member Join mailing list (please tick)

You can also return to Maskers Theatre,
c/o 29 Lime Gardens, West End, Southampton, SO30 3RG

Why not join The Maskers Theatre Company?

The company is keen to welcome new members with an interest in all aspects of theatre.

Contact Jo Iacavou our Membership Officer,
Tel: 023 80481161 Jo.iac@live.co.uk

If you would like to receive regular updates on Maskers productions fill in the slip in the programme and post it in the box in the foyer of the theatre.

To find out more about The Maskers Theatre Company
go to www.maskers.org.uk