



perspectives

CHELTENHAM ARTS CULTURE

Cheltenham Arts Council: awards_funding_publicity_events listings

February – May 2020

*Nell Gifford remembered
Jane Austen and The Cheltonians
Transcribing The Diary Of Edward Wilson's Father*

Advertising Charges

HALF PAGE ADVERT

£25 for CAC members or £75 for non-members

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£50 for CAC members or £150 for non-members

Please contact editor@cheltenhamartscouncil.co.uk for more information.

Submissions must be with us by the following dates for consideration for the next issue:

End of November deadline for Feb/May Issue

End of March deadline for June/Sept Issue

End of July deadline for Oct/Jan Issue

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COVER IMAGE: NELL GIFFORD
HORSES ON PURPLE 1
ACRYLIC INK ON PAPER

*Perspectives is produced three times a year.
The next issue will span June - September 2020.*

**SUBMISSION (ADS AND EVENTS) MUST BE WITH US BY THE END OF MARCH
FOR CONSIDERATION FOR THE NEXT ISSUE. PLEASE EMAIL EVENT DETAILS TO
PERSPECTIVES.LISTINGS@GMAIL.COM**



PERSPECTIVES TEAM

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Dear Readers

Welcome to the spring 2020 edition of Perspectives. It should be another great season for culture of all kinds in and around Cheltenham - do have a look through the listings section to keep up to date with upcoming events.

If one of your new year's resolutions is to try something new, read on! CAC's member organisations offer a huge variety of stimulating and entertaining ways to fill your spare time. In this edition you can read about the programme of events offered by the French Circle - great for brushing up your French language skills. Or how about singing? Cheltenham Choral Society, with its new conductor, is looking for new singers, especially men. Or volunteering? Volunteers are at the core of Cheltenham's cultural life, and there is no shortage of opportunities to participate. One example is a fascinating report about history unfolding at the hands of a volunteer at The Wilson art gallery and museum, who is transcribing the diaries of the father of polar explorer Edward Wilson.

If you know of any young photography enthusiasts, point them in the direction of the Gloucestershire Young Photographer competition, run by Cheltenham Camera Club. CCC have also submitted an article on an exhibition in Cheltenham's twin town Göttingen.

Also in this edition are reports of recent

events that have been supported by CAC, such as a concert by Cheltenham Bach Choir, and plays from both Parrot Productions and the Writers and Directors Workshop. We are particularly pleased to feature two reports from young people who have benefitted from support from the Trafford Memorial Fund (via CAC) in pursuing their dreams in the fields of musical theatre and singing. Our "Meet the Members" section has, this time, morphed into "Meet the Chair of CAC", where Sue Silcock tells us about her priorities and passions.

And finally, a reminder that CAC's annual awards ceremony will take place on Tuesday 24th March at The Playhouse Theatre on Bath Road. At this event, we celebrate significant contributions to the cultural life of Cheltenham over the past year. CAC member organisations will have received details and nomination forms, so please do make sure we get plenty of worthy candidates - and come along to the ceremony to cheer them on.

Happy reading!

Rachel Tedd

PERSPECTIVES EDITOR

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TRANSCRIBING THE DIARY OF EDWARD WILSON'S FATHER

SALLY FERRERS GIVES US AN INSIGHT INTO THE TASK & INTO LIFE IN THE MID TO LATE 1800s

I have completed quite a few transcribing tasks at The Wilson museum, but by far the most interesting is the diary of Dr Edward Thomas (ET) Wilson. ET was the father of Antarctic explorer Edward Wilson who tragically died with Scott only 11 miles from a supplies depot, after walking 1600 miles to the South Pole and back. ET was born in 1832 and had an idyllic childhood living in Hean Castle, Pembrokeshire. His father owned several local coal mines and rebuilt the Castle in the Georgian style. Some years later, ET and his siblings were shocked to be told that their father had lost the Castle and the mines, and they were now on hard times.

Fast forward to around 1852, when ET gained his degree at Oxford, and the church or medicine were his main career options. In pursuit of medicine, he moved to London and lived in a room off the Bayswater Road, walking each day across Hyde Park to St George's hospital (now a hotel). While there, he took advantage of interesting and improving lectures such as 'Comparative Anatomy' (Dr Livingstone in the audience 'looking tired and resting from Africa'), Michael Faraday on 'Electromagnetism' (Prince Albert attending, 'such a handsome man'). On one occasion he watched, along with Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, the return of the soldiers from the Crimean War 'with long beards and filthy, muddy uniforms. Women weeping with relief to see their husbands and brothers'.

ET then decided to spread his wings and pursue his career in medicine in earnest, moving to Cheltenham where he received many invitations to luncheon and was involved in experiments as part of his work



THE WILSON FAMILY COLLECTION AT CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL AND THE CHELTENHAM TRUST.

in Cheltenham Hospital. For recreation he ran distances and formed a small rowing club, which travelled by coach and horses to Tewkesbury to thrash up and down the river there. Lots of picnics were part of this jolly scene.

Enter Mary Whishaw. ET was invited to Sunday luncheon at Mrs Whishaw's several times, and his diary revealed that Mary was very special to him. Love blossomed and ET asked to marry her - only to be refused by Mrs W. Suffering from shock and disbelief, poor ET ran from Cheltenham to Gloucester to alleviate his anger and disappointment.

Months later on a Devon walking holiday, ET was surprised to come across the Whishaw family, and he and Mary were able to steal some time together. This time Mrs W agreed to their marriage, which took place a few months later at Christ Church, Cheltenham. It's interesting to be typing up this information because I know that Mary had 10 children, one of whom, of course, would become very famous indeed.

They set up home in 26 Montpellier Street - the front façade is engraved to say they lived there - and the Wilson babies made their appearance. Charles Dickens visited Cheltenham and they attended his reading of 'The Death of Little Nell', so passionately rendered that the audience was in floods of tears.

ET worked hard to improve the lot of the good people and particularly the poor of Cheltenham. These were the days before

antibiotics, penicillin and anaesthetics, and scarlatina, smallpox and diphtheria were rife. By experimenting with the algae found in the system used to supply water to the town, ET found disease-carrying bacteria. This started his campaign to improve the drinking water for the town, which meant taking on the offending water company. Twice he was invited to report his findings to the House of Commons.

And that is where I have got to in the diary. Another 50 pages to go, then it's probably Volume 2! I use surgical gloves to handle the huge, heavy leather-bound book. It was written in 1908 and was apparently compiled from earlier diaries and his excellent memory. I am so engrossed in ET's 19th Century world that it's always something of a shock to step out of The Wilson into the 21st Century!

GLoucestershire Young Photographer 2020

CALLING ALL BUDDING PHOTOGRAPHERS!

Entries open in January for Gloucestershire Young Photographer 2020.

The competition is in its 17th year and is open to all Primary and Secondary pupils in Gloucestershire schools.

Entry is free and very simple - just submit one print up to A4 size.

The theme is open.

Pupils should send their pictures via their school.

THE COMPETITION IS ORGANISED BY CHELTENHAM CAMERA CLUB. FOR RULES AND HOW TO ENTER, AND TO VIEW LAST YEAR'S WINNERS, PLEASE SEE THE CLUB WEBSITE:

WWW.CHELTENHAMCAMERA CLUB.CO.UK

JANE AUSTEN AND THE CHELTONIANS

A NEW PLAY FROM THE WRITERS AND DIRECTORS WORKSHOP:
CAROLINE SUMMERFIELD REPORTS

The Natura Contemporary Theatre, the production arm of the Writers and Directors Workshop, is delighted to announce the award of Arts Council National Lottery Funding, in addition to support from Cheltenham Arts Council, for a tour in Gloucestershire of a new stage play, *Jane Austen and the Cheltonians*, written by West End playwright, Caroline Summerfield. Commenting on the award, Phil Gibby, Area Director for South West Arts Council England said:

'Arts and culture activities bring communities together and this tour of "Jane Austen and the Cheltonians", supported through our National Lottery Project Grants programme, is no different. This project will bring a range of community groups together to explore Jane Austen through new eyes, reflecting the diversity of contemporary England.'

Summerfield was inspired to write the play when reading about Jane Austen's undocumented visit to Cheltenham in May 1816. What if, at Jane Austen's death, not all of the letters and manuscripts from her stay in Cheltenham had been burnt by her sister? Enter her novel *The Cheltonians*. As observant as ever of Society's ills and set in 1816, the year following Waterloo, Emma Woodhouse, now newly married, finds herself in Cheltenham sampling the waters from its spas. But the arrivals of a Jamaican-born widow of a wealthy ship owner and then that of an army officer, soon prove too great a temptation



JANE AUSTEN

for Emma, and it is not long before she starts matchmaking with disastrous consequences.

With many plays produced in London, Summerfield is delighted to see her work coming to Cheltenham. Her previous plays have included *Chasing Ibsen* at the Jermyn Street Theatre West End and *The Manuscript* for the Finborough Theatre Off-West End. For *Jane Austen and the Cheltonians*, the production team includes Assistant-Director Amy Holley-Cribbin and stars Abigail Halley (*Random Acts*, Channel 4), and Lynn Thomas (*Doctors*, BBC One). *Jane Austen and The Cheltonians* will be playing at the Everyman Theatre Cheltenham from 6th-8th February 2020.



ABIGAIL HALLEY



LYNN THOMAS

[HTTPS://WRITERSANDDIRECTORSWORKSHOP.COM/NATURA-CONTEMPORARY-THEATRE/](https://writersanddirectorsworkshop.com/natura-contemporary-theatre/)

TICKETS FROM THE EVERYMAN BOX OFFICE: 01242 572573

NELL GIFFORD, CO-FOUNDER OF GIFFORDS CIRCUS

1973 - 2019

The image on the front cover is an artwork by Nell Gifford, and featured in memory of her and her creative spirit. She was the co-founder, driving force and the visionary behind Giffords Circus and sadly died on Sunday 8th December 2019.

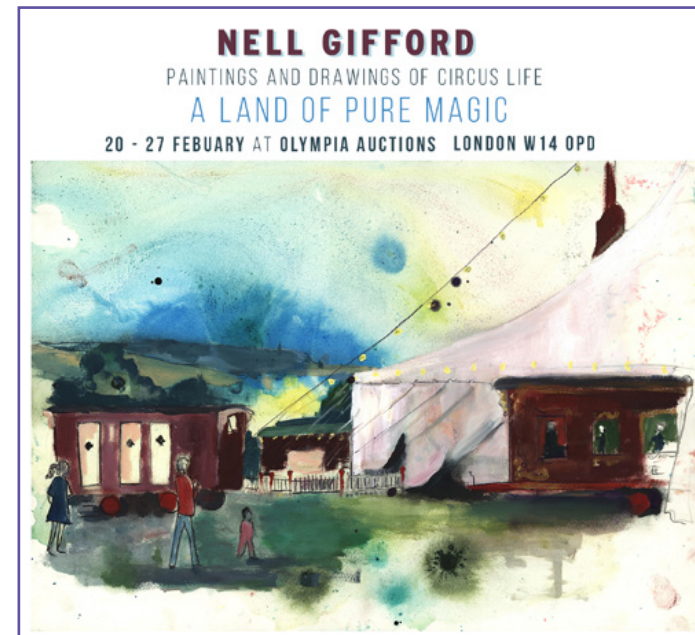
Nell touched so many hearts. Her vision for Giffords Circus was to bring happiness, imagination and enliven people's souls. Giffords Circus shall continue to do just that. Whilst the world is a dimmer place without Nell, she will continue to live through the circus and her artworks.

In 2020 Giffords Circus will celebrate its 20th anniversary. Nell wanted it to be the showstopper and it will be just that. Next year's production, *The Hooley*, will celebrate the first 20 years, the next 20 years and Nell's incredible life. Nell built a



circus to last. It is poised to grow and fulfil Nell's plans for the future.

Nell was a creative genius, a daughter, step-daughter, sister, friend, leader and mother. She leaves behind the next generation - her twins Cecil and Red - who are both part of the Giffords Circus DNA. A selection of Nell's original artworks will be exhibited this February.



CHELTENHAM CAMERA CLUB

“PICTURES FROM CHELTENHAM” EXHIBITION IN GÖTTINGEN

Cheltenham Camera Club recently displayed a selection of members' prints in an exhibition at Torhaus Gallery in Cheltenham's twin town, Göttingen.

Cheltenham member Mike Walker attended the opening night, where over 200 people were present, including the Mayors of both Cheltenham and Göttingen. Erich

Bettwieser from Fotoclub Göttingen spoke about the quality and composition of the photographs. He also had a favourite photo - 'A Stormy Sea' - which he said was "of extraordinary quality." He was fascinated by how the photographer Martin Fry managed to capture the combination of the rain, wind and sea.



A STORMY SEA - MARTIN FRY
(CHELT CAMERA CLUB)



TORHAUS GALLERY



MEET THE CHAIR OF CHELTENHAM ARTS COUNCIL

SUE SILCOCK TELLS US ABOUT HERSELF



SUE SILCOCK

Q What are your aims as the new chair of CAC?

A To publicise the work that CAC does in the community and increase our membership base.

Q Why should voluntary arts organisations in Cheltenham join CAC?

A Several reasons: 1) to feel part of a community of voluntary arts organisations of many and varying interests; 2) to have the opportunity to recognise and reward outstanding achievements or service within your organisation via the CAC Awards; 3) to have access to grants both from the Cheltenham Borough Council and from our own resource, the Trafford Fund, and 4) to add additional weight to any opinions on Cheltenham's culture expressed by the CAC as a group.

Q What do you love about living in Cheltenham?

A I love the gentle but busy atmosphere that there is in the town generally. There is an ease of access of good shopping experiences as well as a range of culture activities such as the theatre and musical concerts. Then there is the "buzz" created by the various festivals, from the racing festivals in the spring and autumn, to the Literary Festival, and the Jazz, Science and Music festivals.

Q Tell us about your own arts activities: what do you get up to in your spare time?

A I am very keen on choral singing and belong to two choirs, Tewkesbury

Choral Society and Cheltenham's own Bach Choir. I also enjoy the theatre and appreciate the range of shows available at the Everyman - there is really no need to have to travel to London! I like the cinema as well. Then there are craft activities - I attend a weekly art class and enjoy sewing and knitting. I also enjoy playing bridge - is that an arts activity?

Q Tell us one unusual or surprising fact about yourself.

A I am struggling with this question - I feel I am a very normal and unsurprising person. The best I can do is to say that I have visited Antarctica twice, once from New Zealand and once via the Antarctic Peninsula. I find the Antarctic a very special and overwhelming place, and richer for its association with Cheltenham via Edward Wilson.

Q What's your favourite sandwich?

A I adore egg mayonnaise sandwiches!

If you are a member of an organisation and would like to find out about joining CAC, please contact chair@cheltenhamartscouncil.co.uk

THE TRAFFORD MEMORIAL FUND

FEEDBACK FROM GRANT RECIPIENTS

The Trafford Memorial Fund is the combined legacy of two sisters, Ann and Cecily Trafford. Its object is the advancement of education through the promotion and encouragement of music and the arts in Cheltenham. Two groups may benefit from the Fund – local voluntary arts organisations (usually affiliated to Cheltenham Arts Council), and students and other young people based locally. The two articles below are splendid examples of how these funds are used by young people.

GRACE TOWLE was awarded a grant towards attendance at the Training Choir of the National Youth Choir of Great Britain (NYCGB).

“Since the age of 11, I have been a member of the NYCGB Girls’ Choir, going on two 5-day residential courses a year to learn music with the aim of performing in a concert at the end of each course.

In the summer of 2018 I auditioned for the NYCGB Training Choir, and attended my first course in August 2019, along with 75 other people aged 15 - 18. It was definitely my favourite course yet. The music was much more interesting and challenging, and I believe it really helped me improve my musicianship and technical skills. It was so much fun seeing my friends from the Girls’ Choir, meeting new people and hearing how amazing the choir was. The course also provided small workshops for musical skills other than singing, for example beat-boxing, conducting and composing jazz pieces. I learnt invaluable musical and social skills such as sight reading, blending, confidence and stepping outside of my comfort zone. I am really looking forward to my next Training Choir course in the summer of 2020.”

REUBEN LUKE BURROWS was awarded a grant towards dance clothes and singing materials for his course at the Guildford School of Acting.

“Just wanted to send a small update about how your donation has helped me in my training and how I’ve begun to give back. I am just about to enter my second year at Guildford School of Acting and have thoroughly enjoyed the first year of my training. I have been lucky enough to have some fantastic experiences this year such as performing twice at Cadogan Hall in special concerts, seeing a musical theatre masterclass by Patti LuPone, and performing in the British Theatre Academy summer musical, Dogfight, just to name a few. Experiences like this have helped me to progress in my training and are something that I will never forget and that’s partly down to your generosity. I am so grateful and I am excited to continue my training and add more experiences like this to my list.

When I returned to Gloucestershire over the summer I began teaching ballet straight away, and with the help of my old teacher, I covered classes that ranged from Grade 5 to Advanced. This teaching experience was very rewarding and I was able to speak to people who are hoping to enter the musical theatre or performing world as someone who is currently doing that ... Returning home this summer really made me appreciate the training I received and the funding that you gave me to be able to get to the next level.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this and I hope you know how grateful I am for what you’ve given me and helped me to achieve.”

GLOUCESTERSHIRE WRITERS’ NETWORK

LOCAL VOICES AT THE LITERATURE FESTIVAL

On a colourful autumn evening, we sat and listened as the winners and runners up of The Gloucestershire Writers’ Network competition added their voices to the storytellers and poets already featured at the Cheltenham Literature Festival.

We were the passengers on journeys all inspired by the theme “Numbers” and, as is the way with these things, found ourselves intrigued and entertained by the emotions, lands and lifestyles we visited. The judges, Stephen Daniels and Amanda Reynolds, added their own tales to the mix, sharing extracts of their poetry and prose and it was a shame really when it all had to draw to a close.

Run by a small but enthusiastic group of volunteers, the GWN aims to promote all things “writing” across the county. We are lucky to have the continued support of our sponsors and of the Festival, to whom we are very grateful, and were delighted this year with a record number of nearly 230 entries to the competition. As we look to the future, we hope that more and more Gloucestershire scribblers will be tempted to share their ideas, imagination and talent with us, and by doing so will help to make the network a real success.



JULIE CARTHY, PROSE WINNER, COPPING BY NUMBERS



SARAH HEMINGS, POETRY WINNER, VESTRY

The GWN website <https://gloswriters.org.uk/> has lots of information, including more details on the competition, the winners, and how to buy the pamphlet showcasing their work.

Please give us your feedback, suggestions or any news about your writing events and successes, or follow us on Facebook and Twitter: GlosWriters@groups.facebook.com and [@GWNgloswriters](https://twitter.com/GWNgloswriters)

LISTINGS: EVENTS DIRECTORY JANUARY - MAY 2020

VISUAL ARTS

Cheltenham Camera

Club Thursdays, 7.30pm, Holy Apostles Church Hall, a varied programme of quality presentations and competitions. New members always welcome! cheltenhamcameraclub.co.uk

Cotswold Art Club
Demonstration: Sheila Bryant, a portrait in charcoal and rub-out technique

Sat 15 Feb, 2.30-4.30pm, The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, first taster visit is free, info and updates: cotswoldartclub.com

Holst Birthplace Museum: Toadstool night lights

Tue 18 Feb, 11am-3pm, children's craft drop-in, holstmuseum.org.uk

Holst Birthplace Museum: Sewing Club

Sat 22 Feb, 2-3.30pm, for children aged 8-12

Cotswold Art Club
Demonstration: Tracy-Jane Rees demonstrates Brusho Sat 21 Mar, 2.30-4.30pm, The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, first taster visit is free, info and updates: cotswoldartclub.com

Holst Birthplace Museum: Easter Baskets

Tue 7 Apr, 11am-3pm, children's craft

drop-in, holstmuseum.org.uk

Holst Birthplace Museum: Spring Bulbs

Tue 14 Apr, 11am-3pm, children's craft drop-in.

Cotswold Art Club**Demonstration:****Caroline Green, pastel and pen animal painting**

Sat 18 Apr, 2.30-4.30pm, The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, first taster visit is free, info and updates: cotswoldartclub.com

Holst Birthplace Museum: Sewing Club

Sat 25 Apr, 2-3.30pm, for children aged 8-12, holstmuseum.org.uk

Cheltenham Camera Club Annual Exhibition & Glos Young

Photographer of the Year Wed 6- Sat 16 May, Chapel Arts, Knapp Road, celebrating the work of members and showcasing selected prints from the 17th Gloucestershire Young Photographer of the Year competition.

Cotswold Art Club

Demonstration: Conrad Clarke, landscape, using texture, pattern, and narrative elements Sat 16 May, 2.30-4.30pm, The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, first taster visit is

free, info and updates: cotswoldartclub.com

free, info and updates: cotswoldartclub.com

Holst Birthplace Museum: Stained glass windows

Tue 26 May, 11am-3pm, children's craft drop-in, holstmuseum.org.uk

AT THE GARDENS GALLERY, MONTPELLIER GARDENS:

10am-5pm daily, as listed:

Photovision Wed 5- Tue 11 Feb, Cheltenham

Camera Club members, exhibition of work from some of the leading photographers in Gloucestershire.

Diverse Images and Form Wed 12- Tue 18 Feb, work by Rosemary Frith and Liney Hill.**Sule Alat** Wed 19- Tue 25 Feb.**The Real Lion King** Wed 26 Feb- Tue 3 Mar, exhibition of work by Heidi Pay.**Art for the Imagination** Wed 4- Tue 10 Mar, includes work by Tony Davie.**Nau Arts** Wed 11- Tue 17 Mar, Sophie Starkey.**Andy Watt** Wed 25- Tue 31 Mar.**Jane Few** Wed 1- Tue 7 Apr.

Three Artists Wed 8 - Tue 14 Apr, includes work by Simon Howe.

Mike Duckering, Wed 15- Tue 21 Apr.

Gerald Crittle Wed 22- Sun 26 Apr.

Jazz Festival, Sun 26 Apr- Tue 12 May, a special exhibition to celebrate the festival.

Cheltenham Group of Artists Spring Exhibition Fri 15- Tue 19 May.

David Pugh Wed 20- Tue 26 May, Collages and Paintings.

Landscape and Memory Wed 27 May- Tue 2 Jun, exhibition of work by Angi Spencer.

MUSIC

Cheltenham Opera Society: Siegfried and Götterdämmerung, Wagner Mon 3 Feb, 7pm, £5 for non-members payable at the door, St Andrew's Church, Montpellier, talk by Simon Rees.

Organ Recital by Huw Williams Tue 4 Feb, 1.15-2pm, Cheltenham College Chapel, music by Widor and Mulet.

Cheltenham Music Society: Chiaroscuro Quartet Tue 4 Feb, 7.30pm, £25/20 U26s £5, Pittville Pump Room, Beethoven: String Quartet in F Op 59 No 1 "Razumovsky", String

Quartet in B flat Op 130. cheltmusicsoc.co.uk
Cheltenham Music Society: Fitzroy Quartet Sun 16 Feb, 3pm, £10, U26s free, Prince Michael Hall, Dean Close, Arvo Pärt: Summa, Lutoslawski: String Quartet, James MacMillan: Memento, Benedict Mason: String Qt No.1. cheltmusicsoc.co.uk

Cheltenham Opera Society: Siegfried, Wagner (DVD) Sun 1 Mar, 2pm, £5 for non-members payable at the door, St Andrew's Church, Montpellier, cheltenhamoperasociety.org.uk

Organ Recital by Matthew Martin Tue 3 Mar, 1.15-2pm, Cheltenham College Chapel, music by JS Bach and Martin, performed by the Precentor & Director of Music, Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge.
Cheltenham Chamber Orchestra Sat 7 Mar, 7.30pm, St Andrew's Church, Montpellier, Mozart: Symphony No.32 in G Maj, Bruch: Violin Concerto No.1 in G Maj, Mendelssohn: Symphony No.3 in A Min "Scottish". Cond. Toby Purser, violin

EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY - MAY 2020

George Ewart.
Cheltenham Symphony Orchestra: A Voyage around Europe Sat 14 Mar, 7.30pm, £17, £14, students 50%, 18 and under free, Pittville Pump Room, Mediterranean Sunshine: De Falla: Ritual Fire Dance, Chabrier: España, Rodrigo: Concierto de Aranjuez, Tchaikovsky: Capriccio italien, Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio espagnol.
Musica Vera Concert provisionally Sat 21 Mar, date and time tbc, St Gregory's Church, St James Square, A Feast of 17th Century choral music by female composers plus Beatus Vir (Monteverdi), musicavera.org
Cheltenham Opera Society: Götterdämmerung, Wagner (DVD) Sun 22 Mar, 2pm, £5 for non-members payable at the door, St Andrew's Church, Montpellier.
Cheltenham Music Society: Leon McCawley, Piano Thu 26 Mar, 7.30pm, £25/20 U26s £5, Pittville Pump Room, Schubert: Sonata in A, Janáček: On an Overgrown Path Bk 1, Grieg: Three Lyric Pieces

EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY - MAY 2020

(Butterfly, Little Bird, To the Spring), Schumann: Kreisleriana Op 16.

Cheltenham Bach Choir: Rachmaninov Vespers

Sat 28 Mar, 7.30pm, Tewkesbury Abbey, Further details: cheltnbachchoir.com

Cheltenham Philharmonic Orchestra Spring Concert

Sun 29 Mar, 3pm, Pittville Pump Room, Sibelius:

Finlandia, Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite, Sibelius: Symphony No.2, part of the orchestra's 125th anniversary season. cheltenhamphilharmonic.co.uk

Cheltenham Choral Society: Bach: St John Passion

Sat 4 Apr, Christ Church, cheltnchoral.org.uk

Organ Recital by Rachel Mahon

Tue 7 Apr, 1.15-2pm, Cheltenham College Chapel, music by Mendelssohn and Laurin.

Cheltenham Music Society: Magnard Wind Ensemble

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm, £20/15 U26s £5, Pittville Pump Room,

Ligeti: Sechs Bagatellen, Schumann: Kinderszenen Op 15, Ibert: Trois Pièces Brèves, Tomasi: Cinq Danses Profanes et Sacrées,

Zemlinsky: Humoreske, Paul Patterson: Westerly Winds. cheltnmusicoc.co.uk

Cheltenham Opera Society: AGM followed

by Falstaff, Verdi (DVD)

Sat 18 Apr, 5.30pm, £5 for non-members (excluding buffet) payable at the door, St Andrew's Church, Montpellier, buffet supper in the interval (must be ordered in advance), cheltenhamoperasociety.org.uk

Cheltenham Opera Society: Così fan tutte, Mozart

Thu 23 Apr, 7.30pm, Malvern Theatres, English Touring Opera.

Cheltenham Opera Society: Giulio Cesare, Handel

Sat 25 Apr, 7.30pm, Malvern Theatres, English Touring Opera.

Cleeve Chorale Spring Concert

Sat 2 May, 7.30pm, £12, accompanied children free, St Michael & All Angels, Bishop's Cleeve, Chilcott's Requiem and Parry's rarely performed Magnificat. Tickets on the door, from George Lewis Footwear, Woodmancote Newsagents, Gotherington Stores or ring 01242 674114. Further info: cleevechorale.co.uk or info@cleevechorale.co.uk

Organ Recital by Hans Hielscher

Tue 5 May, 1.15-2pm, Cheltenham College Chapel, music by Bédard and Gershwin, performed by the organist and carillonneur of the

Marktkirche, Wiesbaden.

VE Day Concert

Fri 8 May, Gloucester Cathedral, with Churchdown Male Voice Choir.

Cheltenham Symphony Orchestra: A Voyage around Europe

Sat 9 May, 7.30pm, £17, £14, students 50%, 18 and under free, Pittville Pump Room, Voices from the East: Brahms: Hungarian Dances nos. 1-4, Kodály: Dances of Galánta, Smetana: Má Vlast nos. 1-4.

Charlton Kings Choral Society Spring Concert

Sat 16 May, 7.30pm, St Andrew's Church, Montpellier, A Little Lighter Music: Sullivan: Trial by Jury, soloists Helen Wright, John Qualtrough, Ralph Barnes, Melvin Brown, David Smith, Michael Garland. Chilcott: A Little Jazz Mass, Shearing: Psalms and Sonnets.

Oriel Singers at the Winchcombe Festival

Fri 22 May, 7.30pm, Mass in Blue, by Will Todd. The Oriel Singers will be joined by piano, bass and drums, plus a soprano soloist, for a jazz setting of the Latin mass. orielsingers.org.uk

STAGE & SCREEN

Promenade Productions Pre-audition rehearsals: Chicago

29 Jan + 5, 12, 19 Feb, Emmanuel Church Hall, for the summer musical, to be staged at The Playhouse 14-18 July, promenadeproductions.co.uk

Cheltenham Operatic & Dramatic Society: Goodnight Mr Tom

Fri 31 Jan- Sat 8 Feb, 7.30pm (+2pm Sat mat.), Playhouse, an inspiring story, suitable for young and old. codsonline.co.uk

Promenade Productions: Chicago Auditions

Mon 24 Feb, Swindon Village Hall, for the summer musical, to be staged at The Playhouse 14-18 July, promenadeproductions.co.uk

The 94th Cheltenham Festival of Performing Arts

Tue 5- Sat 16 May, cheltenhamfestivalofperformingarts.co.uk

Cheltenham Operatic & Dramatic Society: Shrek the Musical

Tue 26- Sat 30 May, 7pm (plus 3 matinees), Everyman, ogre-sized fun for everyone! codsonline.co.uk

LECTURES & MEETINGS

WEA Walking Book Group

monthly, 2-4pm, Pittville Park, info: marketingsouthwest@wea.org.uk

Cheltenham German Club Stammtisch

twice a month, the Bank House pub, for details: cheltenhamgermanclub.webs.com

Cheltenham German Club Daytime Conversation Group

first Thursday of the month, Everyman, details: hazelphanson@googlemail.com

Guten Montag German Discussion Group

Mondays, 11am-12.30pm, £8, Global Footsteps Café, Portland Street, cheltenhamgermanclub.webs.com/events.htm

Cercle Français: Ces remarquables Louis

Mon 3 Feb, 7.30pm, St Luke's Church Hall, St Luke's Place, with Germaine Jones. cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk

Cheltenham Local History Society

Tue 4 Feb, 10.30am, £2, St Luke's Church Hall, History of Dowty's and an introduction to the Archive, with Ally McConnell.

EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY - MAY 2020

Cheltenham Poetry Society Workshop

Tue 4 Feb, 7-10pm, £5, Parmoor House, Lypiatt Terrace, further info: Sharon Larkin 07540 329389.

Cheltenham Civic Society: Cheltenham's Roads and Pavements

Tue 4 Feb, 7.30pm, Parmoor House, Lypiatt Terrace, talk by Chris Riley, Area Highways Manager, Gloucestershire CC.

Holst Birthplace Museum: Victorian Book Group

Wed 5 Feb, 10-11.30am, The Moonstone by Wilkie Collins, revisit old favourites and discover forgotten classics in this monthly meet-up, no need to book just turn up having read the book. Free with an annual admission ticket, a small donation towards refreshments welcome. holstmuseum.org.uk

Cheltenham Italian Society: The Geology and Scenery of Italy

Mon 10 Feb, 7.30pm, Parmoor House, Lypiatt Terrace, The Role of Earthquakes, Volcanoes and Tectonic Plates, with Lidia Lonergan. Info: cheltenhamitaliansociety.org.uk

EVENTS FOR JANUARY – MAY 2020

The Arts Society Cheltenham: Frank Lloyd Wright: the architect who broke the box Tue 11 Feb, 7.30 for 8pm, guests £7, refundable on joining, Sacred Hearts Hall, with Anthea Streeter. Guests please book via Mary Wright 01242 582202. theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk

Leckhampton Local History Society Wed 12 Feb, 7.30pm, visitors £2, Glebe Cottages, Church Road, Members' Evening.

Cheltenham German Club: The Architecture of Remembrance Fri 14 Feb, 7 for 7.30pm, Parmoor House, Lypiatt Terrace, British and German Commemoration of the First World War, with Adrian Barlow, in English. Info: cheltenhamgermanclub.webs.com

Cercle Français Mon 17 Feb, 7.30pm, St Luke's Church Hall, change to programme, details tbc. cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk

The Arts Society Cheltenham: Dublin: The Abbey Theatre Tue 18 Feb, 10 for 10.30am, £7 inc. refreshments, Isbourne House, 3 Wolseley Terrace, with Malcolm Kelsall. Non-

members welcome, info: Alexandra Davies 01242 230294.

Cheltenham Local History Society Tue 18 Feb, 7.30pm, Municipal Offices, Dr Walter Hadwen - Hero or Charlatan? with Paul Drinkwater.

Prestbury Local History Society: The curious will of George Perton Mon 24 Feb, 7.30pm, Prestbury W.I. Hall, with Tony Noel.

Cheltenham Poetry Society Members' Writing Group Meeting Tue 25 Feb, further info: Sharon Larkin 07540 329389.

Holst Birthplace Museum: Twinkle Fri 28 Feb, 10-11am, drop-in for under 5s: Spring Bulbs, free with general admission.

Cercle Français: Soirée film Mon 2 Mar, lieu à confirmer. cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk

Holst Birthplace Museum: Victorian Book Group Wed 4 Mar, 10-11.30am, The Speckled Band by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, revisit old favourites and discover forgotten classics in this monthly meet-up, no need to

book just turn up having read the book. Free with an annual admission ticket, a small donation towards refreshments welcome. holstmuseum.org.uk

The Arts Society Cheltenham: Bonnard's colour: the alchemy of light Tue 10 Mar, 7.30 for 8pm, guests £7, refundable on joining, Sacred Hearts Hall, with Dr Nicholas Watkins. Guests please book via Mary Wright 01242 582202. theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk

Leckhampton Local History Society Wed 11 Mar, 7.30pm, visitors £2, Glebe Cottages, Church Road, Get Off My Land: The History of farming in Gloucestershire from Pre-history to WW1, with John Putley.

Gloucestershire Gardens & Landscape Trust Mon 16 Mar, 7.15pm, £4, non-members £6, St Luke's Church Hall, Vanessa Berridge in conversation with Anne Chambers about the development of the garden at Kiftsgate Court over three generations. ggl.org

Cercle Français: La Haute Couture Mon 16 Mar, 7.30pm, St Luke's

Church Hall, with Brigitte Thibaut.

Cheltenham Italian Society: La Storia della Mafia dalle Origini ai Giorni Nostri Mon 16 Mar, 7.30pm, Parmoor House, Lypiatt Terrace, with Luca Paci, in Italian.

The Arts Society Cheltenham: Dublin: Seamus Heaney Tue 17 Mar, 10 for 10.30am, £7 inc. refreshments, Isbourne House, 3 Wolseley Terrace, with Adrian Barlow. Non-members welcome, info: Alexandra Davies 01242 230294.

Cheltenham Poetry Society Reading Group Meeting Tue 17 Mar, 7-10pm, £4, Parmoor House, Lypiatt Terrace, further info: Sharon Larkin 07540 329389.

Cheltenham Local History Society Tue 17 Mar, 7.30pm, Municipal Offices, Cheltenham's Past Members of Parliament, with Martin Horwood.

Cheltenham Civic Society AGM Wed 18 Mar, 7.30pm, Parmoor House, Lypiatt Terrace.

Cheltenham German Club: Gerhart Hauptmann Fri 20 Mar, 7 for 7.30pm, Parmoor House, Lypiatt Terrace, with Marc Schweissing, in German.

Prestbury Local History Society: Travel in the coaching era Mon 23 Mar, 7.30pm, Prestbury W.I. Hall, with Nicholas Herbert.

Holst Birthplace Museum: Twinkle Fri 27 Mar, 10-11am, drop-in for under 5s: Easter Baskets, free with general admission.

Cercle Français: Manon Lescaut, sphinx étonnant! Mon 30 Mar, 7.30pm, St Luke's Church Hall, with Emilie Capulet.

Cheltenham Poetry Society Members' Writing Group Meeting Tue 31 Mar, further info: Sharon Larkin 07540 329389.

Holst Birthplace Museum: Victorian Book Group Wed 1 Apr, 10-11.30am, The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde, revisit old favourites and discover forgotten classics in this monthly meet-up, no need to book just turn up having read the book. Free with an annual admission ticket, a small donation towards refreshments welcome. holstmuseum.org.uk

Holst Birthplace Museum: Bake Back in Time Sat 4 Apr, 11am-

EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY – MAY 2020

3pm, seasonal Victorian baking on the coal-fired range. Free with an annual admission ticket, a small donation towards refreshments welcome.

Cheltenham Italian Society: The Etruscans and their Frescoes Mon 6 Apr, 7.30pm, Parmoor House, Lypiatt Terrace, with Linda Farrar.

Cheltenham Local History Society Tue 7 Apr, 10.30am, £2, St Luke's Church Hall, The Lives of the Narrowboat Women, their Children and their Crafts, with Jill Ruiz.

Cheltenham Poetry Society Workshop Tue 7 Apr, 7-10pm, £5, further info: Sharon Larkin 07540 329389.

Leckhampton Local History Society Wed 8 Apr, 7.30pm, visitors £2, Glebe Cottages, Church Road, Exploring Cheltenham's Decorative Ironwork, with Geoff North.

The Arts Society Cheltenham: The Magnificence of Persia: the art of Isfahan, Shiraz and ancient Persepolis Tue 14 Apr, 7.30 for 8pm, guests £7, refundable on joining, Sacred Hearts Hall,

EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY - MAY 2020

with Chris Bradley. Guests please book via Mary Wright 01242 582202. theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk

Cheltenham Poetry Festival Thu 16- Sat 25 Apr, the festival celebrates its 10th exciting programme, with the theme 'WILD!'. cheltenhampoetryfest.co.uk

Cheltenham German Club: Heinrich von Kleist Fri 17 Apr, 7 for 7.30pm, Parmoor House, Lypiatt Terrace, with Ricarda Schmidt, in German.

Gloucestershire Gardens & Landscape Trust Mon 20 Apr, 7.15pm, £4, non-members £6, St Luke's Church Hall, Sue Spielberg talks on the new garden and the house that she and her husband have designed in the Whiteway Colony. gglt.org

Cercle Français: A la découverte de l'Ecole de Rouen Mon 20 Apr, 7.30pm, St Luke's Church Hall, with Catherine Greensmith.

The Arts Society Cheltenham: Edinburgh: The impact of the Scottish Enlightenment on art and architecture Tue 21 Apr, morning, £12 inc. refreshments, Isbourne House, 3 Wolseley Terrace, two talks, lecturer tbc. Non-members welcome, info: Alexandra Davies 01242

230294. **Holst Birthplace Museum: Knit Your Bit** Tue 21 Apr, 2-4pm, spend a cosy few hours in front of our fire knitting and enjoying tea and cake, no need to book. Free with an annual admission ticket, a small donation towards refreshments welcome.

Cheltenham Local History Society Tue 21 Apr, 7.30pm, Municipal Offices, A history of the early Quakers of Cheltenham, with Neela Mann.

Holst Birthplace Museum: Twinkle Twinkle Fri 24 Apr, 10-11am, drop-in for under 5s: Spring Hares, free with general admission.

Prestbury Local History Society: Prestbury in the 18th century Mon 27 Apr, 7.30pm, Prestbury W.I. Hall, with Norman Baker.

Cheltenham Poetry Society Members' Writing Group Meeting Tue 28 Apr, further info: Sharon Larkin 07540 329389.

Holst Birthplace Museum: Victorian Book Group Wed 6 May, 10-11.30am, Wives and Daughters by Elizabeth Gaskell, revisit old favourites and discover forgotten classics in this monthly meet-up, no need

to book just turn up having read the book. Free with an annual admission ticket, a small donation towards refreshments welcome. holstmuseum.org.uk

Holst Birthplace Museum: Welsh cakes and drop scones Mon 11 May, 11am-1pm, Bake Your Own with our historic cook (adult workshop).

Cheltenham Italian Society: AGM and talk Mon 11 May, 7.30pm, Parmoor House, Lypiatt Terrace, Alassio (Liguria): città dove mi sento a casa, with Christine Traversa, in Italian, followed by buffet.

The Arts Society Cheltenham: Italy and the Grand Tour: the tourism of the elite in the 18th Century Tue 12 May, 7.30 for 8pm, guests £7, refundable on joining, Sacred Hearts Hall, with Prof Jeremy Black. Guests please book via Mary Wright 01242 582202. artsocietycheltenham.org.uk

Leckhampton Local History Society AGM & Talk Wed 13 May, 7.30pm, visitors £2, Glebe Cottages, Church Road, A little

History of Cheltenham's Quakers, 1650 to 1850, with Neela Mann.

Cheltenham German Club: AGM & Unterhaltung Fri 15 May, 7 for 7.30pm, Parmoor House, Lypiatt Terrace, Vortrag: Spreewald und Gurken! Greg Arnold.

Holst Birthplace Museum: Bake Back in Time Sat 16 May, 11am-3pm, seasonal Victorian baking on the coal-fired range. Free with an annual admission ticket, a small donation towards refreshments welcome.

Cercle Français: Assemblée générale

Mon 18 May, 7.30pm, St Luke's Church Hall, suivie par une mini-conférence donnée par l'un des membres du Cercle (thème à préciser).

Holst Birthplace Museum: Knit Your Bit Tue 19 May, 2-4pm, spend a cosy few hours in front of our fire knitting and enjoying tea and cake, no need to book. Free with an annual admission ticket, a small donation towards refreshments welcome.

Cheltenham Local History Society Tue 19 May, 7.30pm, Municipal Offices, AGM followed by Katherine Parr,

Gloucestershire's Queen: The Life, Love and Times of the Last Wife of Henry VIII, with Mike Bottomley.

Cheltenham Poetry Society Away Day Wed 20 May, full day writing retreat. Further info: Sharon Larkin 07540 329389.

Cheltenham Poetry Society Members' Writing Group Meeting Tue 26 May, further info: Sharon Larkin 07540 329389.

Holst Birthplace Museum: Twinkle Twinkle Fri 29 May, 10-11am, drop-in for under 5s: Ribbons and Bells, free with general admission.

CHELTENHAM'S FRENCH CIRCLE

HIGHLIGHTS FROM AUTUMN/WINTER 2019 BY STELLA CANEY

We had a particularly interesting programme last autumn.

We enjoyed a talk on the late Charles Aznavour, where a number of his songs were played. This was followed by a description of a trip down the River Rhône, when the speaker pointed out a number of interesting highlights. Our other meeting in October was a departure from the norm, as it was not about France, although the talk was given by a French national, who is a lecturer at Bath University. He spoke of the exploration of oceans and the programmes of research in which he had been involved, along with explanations which laymen (the vast majority of the attendees!) could understand.

Our two meetings in November were both a delight - one featuring aspects of life in Madagascar with reference to local artists, and another giving the background to the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and the various characters involved.

The autumn session ended with our usual "Soirée amicale" in December, which included a quiz on French topics, a comedy sketch, French singalong carols, and a variety of interesting food.

Meetings are held in St Luke's Church Hall, GL53 7HP. Contact the Secretary on 01242 676143 or see www.cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk for details of future events. New members and speakers always welcome.

CHELTENHAM CHORAL SOCIETY CELEBRATES!

80TH ANNIVERSARY & A NEW CONDUCTOR

Sue Hartland (CCS Chair) reports:

One of the town's long-standing choirs, Cheltenham Choral Society, celebrated its 80th Anniversary in 2018. Over the years we have sung most of the choral classics, from Mozart to Fauré, Vivaldi to Purcell. We have performed Handel's Messiah over 60 times, many of these at the Cheltenham Town Hall; for our Anniversary we sang Karl Jenkins' haunting *The Peacemakers* at the Pittville Pump Room and were treated to a recital of English and French songs by our President, Dame Felicity Lott.

In September 2019 we welcomed our new Musical Director and Conductor, Alexander Thacker. Originally from Leicester, Alex has degrees in both Choral Conducting and Composition from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. He now lives in Cardiff where he is Musical Director of the Llandaff Cathedral Choral Society, conducts the Cavatina Singers, Penarth, and was Director of Music at the Church of St Andrew and St Teilo, Cardiff, for eight years. Alex is also an accomplished baritone and has also sung for Opera'r Ddraig, Pocket Opera and many local cathedral choirs. He says:

"It is an honour to be appointed as Musical Director for Cheltenham Choral Society, hard on the heels of the choir's 80th anniversary. Cheltenham is a town bursting with culture and music history, and to be part of this town's rich musical tapestry is a great privilege for me. In the coming years I hope to expand the choir and its reputation, allowing Cheltenham Choral Society to flourish and enjoy a long and prosperous future."



Alex began his new appointment with an ambitious and exciting programme – Cherubini's *Requiem*, Vivaldi's *Gloria* and Mozart's *Coronation Mass*, which we performed at Christ Church in November 2019, ably supported on the organ by our accompanist Alison Howell. Concerts in 2020 will include the Bach *St John Passion* on 4 April, and Handel's *Messiah* on 21 November.

We would love to hear from prospective new members, especially tenors and basses; we rehearse on Wednesdays at 7.30 pm at Bethesda Methodist Church in Great Norwood Street. There are no auditions, and you can come along for a few weeks to try us out. You would be assured of a friendly welcome and an enjoyable and challenging evening!

For more information contact
info@cheltchoral.org.uk or visit

cheltchoral.org.uk

CHELTENHAM BACH CHOIR

SUE SILCOCK WRITES ABOUT A RECENT CONCERT, PARTLY SPONSORED BY CHELTENHAM ARTS COUNCIL

Cheltenham Bach Choir recently performed Elgar's "The Dream of Gerontius" in Cheltenham Town Hall.

The concert was a resounding success. David Crown as conductor drew an emotional response to the work with his choice of tempi and phrasing. Joshua Ellicott sang Gerontius with drama and eloquence; and the performances by Catherine Carby as the Angel and Julien van Mellaerts as the priest were notable. vOx, David Crown's own chamber choir from Oxford, greatly added to the

whole evening's experience with their contribution as the semi-chorus.

Cheltenham Bach Choir would like to express their thanks to Michael Kay for his sponsorship of the soloists in memory of Ronald Kay, a previous member of the choir who sadly passed away this year, and to the Cheltenham Arts Council for their sponsorship of vOx.

Vicky Jones, in the audience, contributed the painting below as her response to the concert.



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PARROT PRODUCTIONS

RAVE REVIEWS FOR 'ROTTEN LUCK'!

Parrot Productions had two full houses for the play *Rotten Luck* as part of Cheltenham Heritage Open Days on 15 September 2019. The play is based on a true story from the early 1800s: William and Celia meet in jail for the first time. He's a bit of a jack-the-lad, she's a devout Christian. Although their crimes were quite minor by today's standards, both might be sentenced to be hanged. The hangman narrates the tale. The play reveals the harshness of the criminal justice system during this period.

The *Rotten Luck* audience sympathised with William and Celia. Comments from the feedback form included: *"Hard hitting play full of emotion, brings home the tragedy of the lives of the poor"*, and *"Very excellent telling of a story with so much relevance to social justice"*.

The play was directed by Mike Greenman, and a number of the younger cast members had been trained over the years in Mike's Gloucester youth theatre group, MPG. As one audience member commented: *"Thought the play had excellent actors and a brilliant writer. Loved it. Fantastic, on the verge of tears! Very talented cast!"*

This was the third Parrot Productions play to form part of the Heritage Open Days festival; in 2015, *The Parrot, the Poet and the Philanderer* was performed to full houses, followed in 2017 by three sell-out performances about two women codebreakers at Bletchley Park. *Rotten Luck* was also part of the Gloucester History Festival and was performed at Discover DeCrypt. The play could not have been produced without the generous support of Cheltenham Arts Council, The Chapel Arts of Cheltenham, Discover DeCrypt and Heritage Lottery funds.

Parrot Productions specialise in plays based on true local stories. Lou Beckett wrote both *Rotten Luck* and the play of the two women Bletchley codebreakers, *Bletchley Girls* (previously known as *Secrets, Lies and Spies*). *The Parrot, the Poet and the Philanderer* was written with David Elder. *Bletchley Girls* will be part of the 2020 Science Festival School programme and will have a professional production at Cheltenham Playhouse in May 2020. Further information about upcoming productions can be found by following Parrot Productions on Facebook.

