MERCURY

Colchester Operatic Society presents

Lerner and Loewe's

My Fair Lady

Book and Lyrics by ALAN JAY LERNER

Music by FREDERICK LOEWE

Adapted from George Bernard Shaw's Play and Gabriel Pascal's Motion
Picture "PYGMALION"

Original Production Directed and Staged by Moss Hart
This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International
All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI www.mtishows.co.uk

Thu 25 Jan - Sun 4 Feb 2024

(Excludes Mondays)

7.30pm Evenings | 2:30pm Saturday Matinee | 3pm Sunday Matinee

mercurytheatre.co.uk colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk



We are an amateur theatre company that is there for everyone and anyone who wants to perform or help to put on amazing shows.

Colchester Operatic Society was founded in 1924 and is one of the region's oldest musical theatre companies, performing annually to rave reviews. Over the years we have put on over 130 shows and concerts involving over 8,500 cast and crew.



We currently produce a main show in the early part of the year, running for two weeks at The Mercury Theatre and a summer concert, which has been performed at a variety of smaller venues in and around Colchester.

A huge number of our young people have gone on to form successful careers within the theatrical industry. Many of these are currently performing on West End stages and on your TV screens!



For many of our members it is being part of an exciting theatrical project that interests them. If you love acting, dancing, singing or assisting in other aspects of theatre productions, there is something for you in COS.

We pride ourselves on being community based. Whatever your age, gender, ethnicity, experience or ability, Colchester Operatic Society offers challenging, rewarding and above all FUN activities for anyone with an interest in musical theatre.





NODA, the National Operatic & Dramatic association, founded in 1899, is the main representative body for Amateur Theatre in the U.K. It has a membership of some 2400 amateur/community theatre groups and 300 individual enthusiasts throughout the country.

www.noda.org.uk

Be inspired by amateur theatre

OUR SOCIETY IS PROUD TO BE AFFILIATED TO NODA









Photos courtesy of Sally Parkinson Photography, Pamela Raith and Wild Bears Photography

Our Committees of volunteers keep the society running smoothly, putting in hours of hard work in their own time.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair & Safeguarding Deputy - Katie Cutmore Secretary - Max Woodward Treasurer - Neil Somerville Business Manager - Caroline Fritz Assistant Secretary - Laura Hicks CO2 Chair & Safeguarding Lead – Charlotte Butcher Inclusion Lead - Becki Lee Funding Co-ordinator - Wayne Setford Marketing & Events Chair - Jessica Bailey Vice Chair - Andrew Hodgson Committee Member – Claudia Haswell Cast representative - Valentine Cavanagh-White

CO2 COMMITTEE:

Chair & Safeguarding Lead - Charlotte Butcher Secretary – Max Woodward Treasurer – Neil Somerville Business Manager – Caroline Fritz Vice Chair – Clair Cutting Cast Representatives - Scarlett Brothers & Nicholas Members - Kirsty Bryant, Stefanie Wyatt, Katie Cutmore & Maddy Smith

MARKETING & EVENTS COMMITTEE

Chair - Jessica Bailey Website - Mike Cutmore Media Design – Emma Theedom Members - Koralia Salacuri, Natasha Gadenne, Shannon Hannah, Charlotte Butcher, Katie Cutmore

PRESIDENT

John Enfield

LIFE MEMBERS

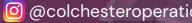
John Enfield, Sylvia Hawkins, Alan Larner, Sally Leung, Val Massey, Barbara Pears, Gill Plumtree, Barbara Ryan, Barbara Scully, Ann Taylor, Colin Thorne, Liz Thorne, Maggie Walton and Trevor Walton

To find out more about our future productions or how you can become involved with the society, please visit www.colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk

Or follow us on



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Letter FROM THE CHAIR

I'm really pleased to present this production of My Fair Lady at the Mercury Theatre Colchester, which is the fourth time Colchester Operatic Society has performed the show. Our first production in 1976 starred Barbara Ryan as Eliza, who then went on to play Mrs Pearce in our third production in 2006, and who is reprising this role for you on stage now. We also produced the show in 1989, with our current Society President, John Enfield, playing Alfred P. Doolittle. Our 2006 production also saw Graham Bowden star as Henry Higgins, who is now returning to the stage in this production as Colonel Pickering. We had a record number of people auditioning to be cast in this show with many new members joining us alongside members, just like Barbara and Graham, who have performed in a variety of previous shows with us over the years. As we approach our 100th year in 2025, it is heart-warming to see the Society grow and continue to welcome so many new members from our local community.

Whilst we unfortunately couldn't cast all 73 people who auditioned, I am also proud of the fact many of those who weren't cast have continued to support the production behind the scenes, alongside other members who didn't audition, including members of our youth section, CO2. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them, and everyone involved in this production, for their time, energy, hard work, commitment, and support towards the Society. Co-ordinating and watching everything come together through this teamwork has been an honour.

My Fair Lady is a classic musical set in London in 1912. It highlights some attitudes towards women and the British class system, that may not be attitudes upheld widely in today's modern world, but they are still relevant issues some people face in present day times but in different contexts. We aim for audiences to reflect on these attitudes and how things have and haven't changed in today's world. To our Society, every person involved is valued, regardless of their gender or economic background – from chorus parts to lead roles, from crew members, props team, make-up and wardrobe team to stage managers, committee members, directors and musical directors. All make invaluable contributions to bring you musical theatre magic.

Our performers, management team and backstage crew are all volunteers and members of the local community, who give their time and talent for free, as they love being able to bring great theatre to you. If you love musical theatre, this production has inspired you to get involved, and you would like to be part of Colchester Operatic Society, then please visit our website www.colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk to find out more and/or get in touch – we would love to hear from you. If you wish to financially support the Society, which is a registered Charity, all donations are gratefully received – see later on in the programme for more details.

Katie Cutmore, Chair of Colchester Operatic Society

The CREATIVE TEAM



Claire Carr, Director / Choreographer

After graduating with a BA(Hons) Degree in Performing Arts Dance in London, Claire was involved in theatre for many years before returning to pursue her training as her chosen career in 2016. She now works as a full-time Theatre Director & Choreographer, working with numerous societies across Essex including CAODS (Chelmsford), WAOS (Witham), BMTS (Brentwood), LODS (Leigh On Sea), WOW Youth (Witham) and Young Gen (Chelmsford). Many of her productions have been nominated for or won prestigious NODA Awards, as well as NETG Awards (North Essex Theatre Guild) – both for overall production, technical and choreographic achievement. Claire regularly runs Musical Theatre Dance Classes and delivers Summer Schools and Workshops, as well as working on creative collaborations for the Chelmsford and Colchester Fringe Festivals, and on the development of new work, including her own.

Claire is delighted to be working for the first time with COS on this huge production of 'My Fair Lady'! She would like to thank the cast and production team for working so hard, it certainly takes a strong team of people behind the scenes to make it all come together! It has been a pleasure working alongside Geoff and Holly, as well as Katie, Melanie, Terry and Andy to name just a few – she thanks them for their support, hard work and laughs they have had along the way! COS have been such a welcoming and fun society to work with. She thanks the Committee for entrusting this production to her and hopes you enjoy every minute of this 'loverly' production!

Holly Bird, Assistant Director

Holly has had a love of theatre since first taking to stage at age 4. She has performed across the country with several musical theatre companies and dance companies, which is where her passion for musical theatre started. Holly joined COS in 2019 after moving back to the area from London. She has been performing with the society ever since, and more recently, taken on creative team roles in productions. In 2022, Holly Choreographed and Assistant directed the COS concert 'From Page to Stage', and from here, her love for getting back into creating theatre grew stronger.

My Fair Lady is a production that Holly has had a wonderful time creating along side Claire and Geoff, and would like to thank them for their support and trusting her to help the vision of the show come to life. Holly is immensely proud of the company involved, both onstage and those working behind the scenes, and she is very excited for you to see how all of their hard work and commitment has come together.





Geoff Osborne, Musical Director

Before he retired from full-time teaching in 2011, Geoff had dedicated his life to music education. He taught in local schools for 35 years, and worked with Essex County Council in schools and colleges across the county.

Geoff has been a musical director for a number of local societies for nearly 30 years, helping produce: Annie, Carousel, 42nd Street, Guys and Dolls, Crazy for You, Oliver, Oklahoma, Half a Sixpence, Sweet Charity, Anything Goes, Thoroughly Modern Millie, South Pacific, Little Shop of Horrors, The Addams Family, Fame, Singing in the Rain, Spamalot and many others.

Geoff's association with Colchester Operatic Society began as musical director for the much acclaimed production of Jekyll & Hyde, and a year later with the popular musical Hairspray. He was also MD for CO2's production of The Wizard of Oz in 2018.

In addition to all this, he runs a popular weekly community choir in Brightlingsea, and teaches privately. Geoff says "My Fair Lady has been a lot of fun, and it has been a real delight working with such a talented team, and cast."

Lighting Design, Peter Small

Sound Design, Wesley Laing



ELIZA DOOLITTLE Hannah Ambrose

u/s Naomi Carter

PROF HENRY HIGGINS Wayne Setford

u/s Tom Pleasant

COLONEL PICKERING Graham Bowden

ALFRED P. DOOLITTLE Stuart Williams

FREDDY EYNSFORD-HILL Tom Pleasant

u/s Eddie Thorpe

MRS PEARCE Barbara Ryan

MRS HIGGINS Jackie Grant

MRS EYNSFORD-HILL Sally Leung

JAMIE Ed Mehen

HARRY Eddie Thorpe

MRS HOPKINS Suki Skelton

ZOLTAN KARPATHY Mark Littlewood

LADY BOXINGTON Joanne Davis

LORD BOXINGTON Phil Ager

PROFESSOR HIGGINS' SERVANTS

Kate Davy, Joe Fusi, Nikki McCarron, Natasha Palmer,
Alice Wightman, Jacob Yaxley-Griffiths

DANCE CAPTAINS

Abi Bower, Zoe Farrelly

FEATURED DANCERS

Phil Ager, Abi Bower, Naomi Carter, Valentine Cavanagh-White, Emily Conway, Clair Cutting, Zoe Farrelly, Joe Fusi, Cally Kline, Emily Knight, Mark Littlewood, Lisa Pordham, Ed Mehen, Koralia Salacuri, Elia Teatino, Eddie Thorpe, Adam Webb, Tristan Williams, Jacob Yaxley-Griffiths

COMPANY

Fiona Bocking, Maeve Borges, Becky Clemens, Joanne Davis, Claudia Haswell, Sally Leung, Mark Littlewood, Lauren Nolan, Tom Pleasant, Amanda Powell, Barbara Ryan, Caroline Salmon, Suki Skelton, Sarah White, Sarah Young



Eliza Doolittle. Hannah Ambrose

Hannah starred in her first musical, Les Misérables, at the age of 15 and has loved being on the stage ever since. She has performed roles such as Maria, 'West Side Story,' Rita, 'Made in Dagenham', Josephine, 'HMS Pinafore' as well as several supporting, ensemble and Dance Captain roles during her time at school and university. Hannah now regularly performs in operas and enjoys choral singing, however is thrilled to be back on the musical theatre stage for the first time since 2019. This is Hannah's first show with Colchester Operatic Society and she can't wait to bring this well loved character to the stage.



Professor Henry Higgins, Wayne Setford

This is Wayne's sixth casting in a COS show in recent years, mainly playing the bad guy! He has had the pleasure of presenting Bill Sykes In 'Oliver!', Frollo in 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame' and Lord Farquaad in 'Shrek', plus a range of non musical acting parts locally. You'll have your opinion where Henry Higgins sits in the pantheon of musical theatre "bad guys", but in Wayne's experience, the boos generally give it away!

Wayne came late to acting starting at the age of 36 and is delighted to have found this creative community at that relatively late age . 'Once we get to the theatre there's a genuine sense of a shared goals and a community that deeply supports each other . It's a very special time'



Colonel Pickering, Graham Bowden

Graham is pleased to be performing with the society again at The Mercury theatre, his last show being 'Annie' when he played Daddy Warbucks. With a show always on the go he last performed as Uncle Fester in 'The Addams Family' musical for the Headgate theatre and also performs with Platform musicals. He is loving the new whiskers grown specially for Colonel Pickering.



Alfred P Doolittle

Stuart Williams

Stuart is a relative newcomer to the Society, with this being only his second "big" production with COS; the first being 'Oliver!' in 2019. Stuart has been in many productions over the years at different theatres and enjoys the variety performing in plays, comedies and musicals brings.



Freddy Eynsford-Hill

Tom Pleasant

You may recognise Tom from his roles in previous COS productions, such as Dr. Jekyll in 'Jekyll and Hyde', Link in 'Hairspray', Captain Phoebus in 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame' and the title character in last years' 'Shrek'. Despite enjoying the challenge last year, Tom is thrilled to not be covered in green paint prosthetics for this role!



Mrs Pearce Barbara Ryan

Barbara is delighted to be taking part in MFL during her 50th year with COS. Her 1st major leading role with the society was Eliza in 1976. This part still remains a firm favourite of hers, even after all these years!



Mrs Higgins Jackie Grant

A self professed "born show-off", Jackie has acted with several local groups, although this marks her first show with COS. Off stage, she is a horse-mad, chocoholic bell ringer and keen gardener!



Phil Ager Lord Boxington, Butler, Featured Dancer



Fiona Bocking Company, Queen of Transylvania



Maeve Borges Company, Mary the Landlady



Abi Bower
Dance Captain,
Featured Dancer



Naomi Carter Featured Dancer, Eliza Understudy



Valentine Cavanagh-White Featured Dancer



Rebecca Clemens Company



Emily Conway Featured Dancer



Clair Cutting
Featured Dancer



Joanne Davis Company, Lady Boxington



Kate Davy Servant



Zoe Farrelly Dance Captain, Featured Dancer



Joe Fusi Servant, Featured Dancer



Claudia Haswell
Company



Cally Kline Featured Dancer



Emily Knight Featured Dancer



Sally Leung Company, Mrs Eynsford-Hill



Mark Littlewood Company, Zoltan Karpathy, <u>Featured Dancer</u>



Nikki McCarron Servant



Ed Mehen Jamie, Featured Dancer



Lauren Nolan Company



Natasha Palmer Servant



Lisa Pordham Featured Dancer



Amanda Powell Company



Koralia Salacuri Featured Dancer



Caroline Salmon Company



Suki Skelton Company, Mrs Hopkins



Elia Teatino Featured Dancer, Mrs Higgins' Maid



Eddie Thorpe Harry, Freddy Understudy, Featured Dancer



Adam Webb Footman, Featured Dancer



Sarah White Company



Alice Wightman Servant



Policeman, Featured Dancer



Tristan Williams Jacob Yaxley-Griffiths Servant, Featured Dancer



Sarah Young Company



PRODUCTION TEAM

Stage Manager

Terry Lyon

Deputy Stage Manager

Charlotte Butcher

Backstage Crew

Marcus Almond, Daniel Brewer, Rachel Brewer, Ed Linley,

Doug Mockridge, Mark Tanton, Dave Ward, Bob Wilkinson

Production Manager

Katie Cutmore Elaine Lloyd

Follow Spot 1 Follow Spot 2

Jacob Jones

Sound Designer

Wesley Laing

Production Sound Engineer

Joey Hawken

Sound No 2

Travis Roxburgh

Sound No 3

Liz Moss

Sound Work Experience

Tom Smith

Lighting Designer

Peter Small

Lighting Programmer

Tom Davis

Costumes Lead

Melanie Bird

Assistant Costumes Lead Chloe Jones

Costumes Team

Holly Bird, Sally Cutchie,

Natasha Gadenne, Caitlin Williams-Macklin

Wigs Lead

Caitlin Williams-Macklin

Properties Lead Properties Team **Andy Bird**

Prompt

Jessica Bailey, Diane Emberton, Shannon Hannah Diane Emberton, Andrew Hodgson, Becki Lee

ORCHESTRA

Geoff Osborne **Violins** Sam Carbonero

Cello

Trumpets

Reeds

Nick Bailey

Claire Watts Rachel James Trombone

Steve Hopper Shaun Ballisat

Fiona Hill Clare Lewis Keyboard Richard Harrison Bass Felix Bartle

Percussion Matthew Green

ACKNÓWLEDGEMENTS

Set and Scenery Supplied by

Scenic Projects Ltd. Lowestoft, Suffolk

Costume Supplied by

TRIPLE C's COSTUME HIRE, www.tripleccostumehire.com

COS Costume Team, CAODS

Properties Supplied by

COS, Scenic Projects Ltd. Lowestoft, Suffolk,

Wigs Supplied By

Mercury Theatre, CAODS, Springers Janet Osborne-Williams, Patsy Page

Artwork

Alice Wightman

Programme Design

Gabriella Skinner

Programme Printing

Spingolds

Photography

Wild Bears Photography

Front of House / Programme Sales

Jessica Bailey, Katie Cutmore, Caroline Fritz, Laura Hicks,

Andrew Hodgson, Becki Lee, Neil Somerville

Captioner

Miranda Yates

Colchester Operatic Society would like to express their public thanks to all those who have contributed to this production both on and off stage.

A special thanks to the Mercury Theatre Staff, who have been fantastic as always. Thank you to the Theatre Royal Bury St. Edmunds for the loan of our moon gobo.

Thanks also goes to St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Phillip Morant School, Langenhoe Community Primary & Home Farm Primary School for providing our rehearsal venues. Ellisons Solicitors and Harven Benham Charitable Trust for sponsoring our captioned performances, and to anyone who has not been named but has helped with this production.

Finally a special thank you to you, members of our audience, for all your support.

Scenes and MUSICAL NUMBERS

Time & Place: London, 1912

Act 1

Scene 1: Covent Garden, a cold March night

Overture The Company
Why Can't The English Higgins
Wouldn't It Be Loverly Eliza & Company

Scene 2: A Tenement Section, Tottenham Court Road, later that evening

With A Little Bit Of Luck Doolittle, Jamie, Harry & Company

Scene 3: Higgins' Study, the next evening

I'm An Ordinary Man Higgins

Scene 4: Tenement Section, several weeks later

With A Little Bit Of Luck - Reprise Doolittle, Jamie, Harry & Company

Scene 5: Higgins Study, later that afternoon

Just You Wait Eliza
The Servants' Chorus The Servants
The Rain In Spain Eliza, Higgins & Pickering
I Could Have Danced All Night Eliza, Mrs Pearce & Maids

Scene 6: Outside Ascot, a July afternoon

Scene 7: Ascot, immediately following

Ascot Gavotte The Company

Scene 8: Outside Higgins' House, Wimpole Street, later that day

On The Street Where You Live Freddy

Scene 9: Higgins' Study, a few weeks later

Act 2

Scene 1: The Embassy Promenade, later that evening

The Embassy Waltz The Company

Scene 2: Higgins' Study, 3am the following morning

You Did It Pickering, Higgins, Mrs Pearce & Servants

Scene 3: Outside Higgins' House, immediately following

On The Street Where You Live - Reprise Freddy Show Me Eliza

Scene 4: Covent Garden, 5am in the morning

The Flower Market Eliza & The Company
Get Me To The Church On Time Doolittle, Jamie, Harry & Company

Scene 5: Higgins' Study, 11am the following morning

A Hymn To Him Higgins

Scene 6: The Garden of Mrs Higgins' House, later that morning

Without You Eliza & Higgins

Scene 7: Higgins' Study, that afternoon

I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face Higgins

Finale The Company



- The musical "My Fair Lady" is based on the play by George Bernard Shaw "Pygmalion". The play was named after a mythical artist who sculpted an ideal woman, only to fall in love with her statue!
- Shaw's play was the first time that the expletive "bloody" was ever heard on British stage!
- Rodgers & Hammerstein were the first to try and turn "Pygmalion" into a musical, but gave up! Lerner and Loewe also gave up on their first attempt in 1952, but gave the project another try which led to them writing what was to become "My Fair Lady".
- When the show first opened on Broadway in 1956, Professor Higgins and Eliza Doolittle were played by Rex Harrison and Julie Andrews.
- When Warner Bros. first made the film "My Fair Lady", they asked Rex Harrison to reprise his role, but not Julie Andrews as she was not a big enough name. Instead, Audrey Hepburn played the role.
- When Audrey Hepburn was cast as Eliza, she began working with a vocal coach, but in the end most of Eliza's singing in "My Fair Lady" was performed by Marni Nixon, who had done similar dub work for 'The King and I' and 'West Side Story'.
- As she was not cast in the "My Fair Lady" film, Julie Andrews was instead cast in "Mary Poppins", which was released the same year, and went on to win an Oscar for the role.
- The rain in Spain does not fall mainly on the plain! Most rainfall actually falls in the hills and mountains in the north of the country, rather than the plains in the south.

Please **SUPPORT US**

As a registered charity, your generous donations will go towards future COS/CO2 productions; increasing accessibility for all and some of our expenses, which include:

- Theatre Hire
- Rehearsal Space Costs
- Director & Musical Director Fees Equipment Hire

- Costume & Props Hire
- Show Licensing & Script/Score Hire
- Orchestra/Band Hire

- Expenses
- Captioning
- Members Show Fee Bursary



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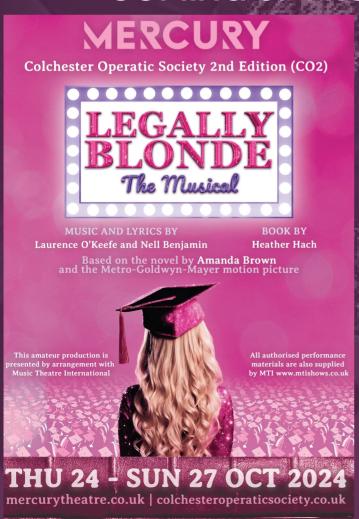
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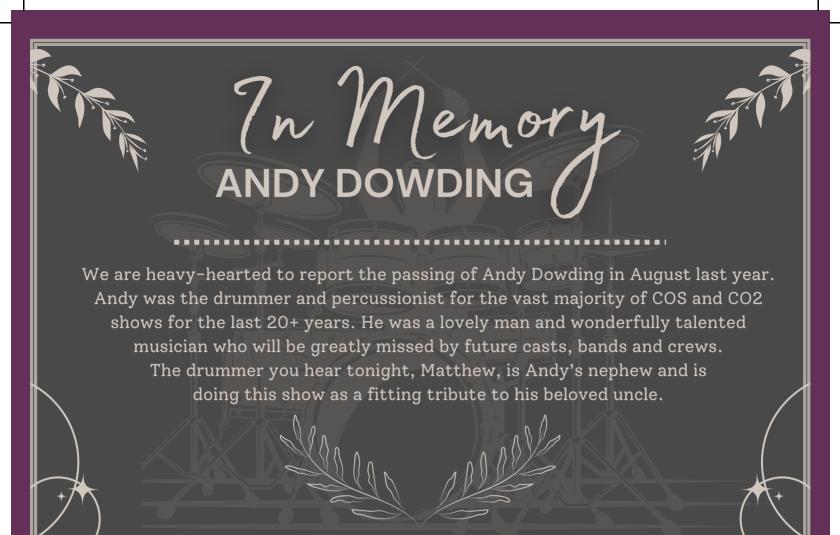




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THE TEAM











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