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Stoke-on-Trent Repertory Theatre

presents



William Shakespeare's

*The Merry Wives
of Windsor*

14th - 19th March 2011 at 7.30pm

Matinee: Sat. 19th at 2.30pm

(An amateur production by arrangement with Samuel French)

Welcome

Stoke-on-Trent Repertory Theatre is supported and run by volunteers who regularly give up their time and without whom we could not deliver the standard of production and customer service which our patrons have come to expect. Some of these people you will encounter tonight, others fulfil a less visible, but no less vital role.

Backstage Crew, Front-of-House, Bar and Coffee Bar, Members, Friends, Young Rep and all other helpers - we are deeply indebted to everyone involved - **Thank You.**

Some information which you may find helpful:

The Bar is open from 6.45 until 11.00pm on performance evenings and drinking-up time is 20 minutes afterwards.

Coffee, tea and confectionery are available in the foyer from 6.45.

All interval refreshments may be ordered before the performance to avoid queuing later.

The car park is open from 6.30. until 11.00pm on performance evenings; overspill parking is available in the Staffordshire University car park further along Leek Road.

Neither the Rep nor Staffordshire University can accept responsibility for damage to, or loss of vehicles.

Please note that smoking is not allowed in any part of the theatre building.

We hope that you enjoy your evening with us.



PLEASE ENSURE THAT MOBILE PHONES ARE SWITCHED OFF DURING THE PERFORMANCE.

Booking Information

Our box office is open from the Monday preceding each Rep production through until the last night of the show from 5.00 to 8.00pm.

Tel: 01782 209784

Book tickets during opening hours from Music Mania, 4/5/ Piccadilly Arcade, Hanley.

Tel: 01782 206000

Why not join our free MAILING LIST ?

Simply complete a mailing list form, available in the bar and leave in the box situated at the Box Office.

www.stokerep.org.uk

Find out 'What's On' and 'What's News' by visiting the Rep's website.

Information about current and forthcoming productions, shows, concerts and activities is available at the click of a mouse.

Join our emailing list by registering at **howard.goodall@stokerep.org.uk**

Thank You

As always, we are indebted to the St John Ambulance Brigade, whose members voluntarily attend all our performances.

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Catch sneaky previews, tasters and teasers of forthcoming Rep productions by checking out the Rep's channel on:



Find us on
Facebook

Since November 2009, the Stoke Rep Players has had its own page on Facebook which allows access to all the information about every Rep Players' production as it takes place.

It is interactive so members can leave comments about our productions on the page's 'wall' or even write reviews. They can comment on video and photographs, join in discussions, share things with their Facebook friends.

Members of the page will see 'wall posts' appear in their home page's 'news-feed' as well as receive 'updates' in their Facebook message inbox.

To access the Rep Players' Facebook page you can click on the link which says 'find us on Facebook' on:

The Rep's main website at: www.stokerep.org.uk

or, alternatively, you can type:

www.facebook.com/stoke.rep.theatre.players



follow us on
twitter

You can now get all the latest news about the Rep productions and join in dialogues with audience, cast and Rep company members. Find out about what's happening at the Rep, as it happens.

The Cast

George Page:

Mistress Page:

Anne Page:

Frank Ford:

Mistress Ford:

Pistol/John:

Nym/Robert:

Sir Hugh Evans:

Doctor Caius:

Mistress Quickly:

The Host:

Fenton:

Sir John Falstaff:

Robin:

Robert Shallow:

Abraham Slender:

Peter Simple:

John Rugby

Nick Proud

Jane Feeney

Laura Mellor

John Wicks

Sarah Stockdale

Oliver Hilsdon

Matt Bateman

Martin Alcock

David Bryan

Caroline Keen

Richard Morrey

Mathew O'Connor

Derek Yeomans

Joseph Wood

Chris Salisbury

Ian Brereton

Paul Deakin

The Children of Windsor

Andriya Georgiou

Amy Keen-Wicks,

Benjamin Wood

Sam Wright

*There will be a twenty minute interval
between Act One and At Two*

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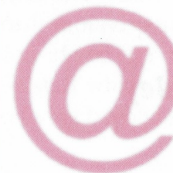
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In Performance

The title page of the earliest edition of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* states that the play was widely performed, both at court in front of Queen Elizabeth I and in the public theatres of the time. Leap forward several hundred years and we find that it is still one of the most popular and regularly performed of Shakespeare's plays. Professional companies, like the RSC, have staged it frequently and the wide range of comic parts ensures that it remains a perennial favourite for amateur theatre groups worldwide.

Its fast paced and fun filled style lends itself particularly well to summer outdoor productions. Indeed, performing the play in the courtyard at the wonderfully preserved Little Morton Hall last July, one of our area's other drama groups, Alsager Community Theatre, had the most perfect backdrop imaginable as the protagonists rushed in and out and round and round the magnificent old building.

But it is not just the setting of the play which allows such flexibility in its staging. In his introduction to the play, Stanley Wells says: 'The concept of community in Windsor is central to the revenge plots and the comedy of the play . . . The period . . . saw massive migration from the countryside to the towns and corresponding increase in the perceived threat of violence and social disorder. This was a period in which social peace and calm was understood not as a natural state for human beings, but as something which needed to be fought for and legislated for on a daily basis. . . Good citizens were those who had a reputation for honesty and peaceable dealing and individuals cared deeply about their good name.' The central themes of community, women empowering themselves to take matters into their own hands and their attempts to create a more ordered and civilised society gives the play a very modern feel which allows directors great artistic freedom when it comes to relocating the action to different periods in history. Recent productions have set the action in the 1940s and it may not be inconceivable that one day we may see it interpreted within today's celebrity culture of WAGs, gossip mags and past-their-prime, overweight comen.

It has been turned into operas in several European languages, converted into plays within the constraints of the Japanese theatre form and in 1929 appeared as Ralph Vaughan Williams' opera, *Sir John in Love* in which the composer employed twenty folk tunes to emphasise the connection between the play and the idealised myth of the golden age of Merry England.

It is a play which allows for huge flexibility and Stratford has seen a wide variety of interpretations, from Henry Ayliff's 1937 production which created an entire half timbered street, to Bill Alexander's 1985 production in which he set the action in the 1950s. Tonight the merry wives romp into the Rep - have a wonderful evening in their company.



Alsager Community Theatre
at Alsager Civic Centre presents

The Crucible

by Arthur Miller

Wednesday 23rd to Saturday 26th March 2011
at 7.45pm

Tickets: £7 (£6 concessions)

Available from Alsager Library from 1st March
or by telephoning (01260) 276165
from 10th March

www.alsagercommunitytheatre.org.uk

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presents

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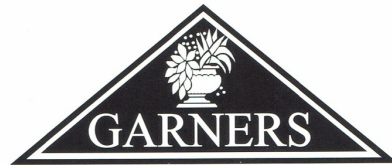
by Lawrence Till

adapted from the novel *A Kestrel for a Knave* by Barry Hine

13th to 16th July 2011 at 7.30pm

Tickets: £6 (Students £5)
available from the Rep Box Office
tel: 01782 209784

Stoke Rep Theatre, Leek Rd., S-o-T, ST4 2TR



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